

MIDWAY'S CHRONO TRIGGER, MK: SPECIAL FORCES, READY 2 ROMBIE AND MORE!

Volume 4 • Issue 9 • August 1999

PS EXtreme

THE PLAYER'S UNOFFICIAL MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE PLAYSTATION



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GREG
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This month, we are pleased to feature a game that will surely be one of '99's biggest PlayStation titles. No, not Punky Skunk 2: Return of the Smell I'm talking about Capcom's carnivorous Dino Crisis, which is due out on American shores this September. As you already probably well know, Dino Crisis manages to take the Resident Evil engine three steps further, merging the intense, edge-of-your-seat gameplay from the RE series with a 3D, polygonal engine. The result is nothing short of amazing, spawning a whole new breed of "survival horror" in the process. In order to get the most comprehensive and exclusive information about the game, we went straight to the Raptor's mouth and met with Mr. Shinji Mikami (producer of the Resident Evil series, as well as Dino Crisis), at Capcom's R&D headquarters in Osaka, Japan. Read all about the game, as well as Mikami-san's thoughts and comments, in this month's cover feature (written by Chris Kramer and starting on page 46).

While Dino Crisis might be turning your palms a bit sweaty with anticipation, there are quite a few killer games heading your way, or that have recently shipped to retail. Look to store shelves for Ape Escape, Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Driver, Tomorrow Never Dies, Jade Cocoon, NFL Blitz 2000, Jet Moto 3, Um Jammer Lammy and Omega Boost — just a few of the great PlayStation games you'll be playing toward the end of summer.

With all of the good stuff happening now, it's definitely a lot easier to stay focused on the present rather than turn our thoughts to the next generation juggernaut that's coming sometime next year. This doesn't mean that we won't keep you informed of all of the PlayStation 2 facts, rumors, speculation, hearsay and information as it becomes available. In fact, I'm willing to wager that there will be some surprise announcements regarding the next generation system coming very soon; most likely at this year's Tokyo Game Show in September. As usual, you can count on us to gather, process and report on everything that is PlayStation in these very pages of PSExtreme.

Well, I'm just about done with this issue and you're probably just starting. As always, thanks for reading, enjoy the issue and we'll see you in around or about thirty.

EDITORIALS

GREG OFF

After finishing off the Ape Escape Official strat-guide (with co-author DW) and wrapping up this issue of PSExtreme, Greg is putting in for some much-needed R & R. What will he do during his down-time? Play some Stunt Track Racer and Persian Gulf Inferno on his Amiga 500, of course!

DAVE WINDING

After the birth of his third child (Dane Robert Winding), Dave is simply trying to squeeze two hours out of his life to go watch The Spy Who Shagged Me. He's a simple man with simple needs. With an average slumber period of three hours per night, he should be in the perfect frame of mind. Yeeeah, bay-beeee, yeeeah!

CHRIS KRAMER

Kramer was, once again, berated by the entire Dimension Publishing staff for waiting until the last minute to write the news. In between sessions of Unreal, cruising the internet for Air Soft guns and letting everyone know how good he is, he managed to produce some pretty good stuff.

MARK ANDROVICH

Mark became a contributing editor in 1998 after submitting a sample review. He urges interested readers to stop sending in their sample reviews so that he will continue to have a job. When he isn't playing videogames, he can be found teaching his two toddlers to play videogames instead of watching Teletubbies.

ADAM PAVLACKA

Recent experiences with United Airlines have made Adam realize that, while the airline is one of the few to serve good food, their customer service sucks big time. That's the unfortunate thing about air travel — it is always a choice between the lesser of two evils. Why can't there be a decent airline?

ERIC WINDING

Eric is currently searching the eBay pages for more Thompson Twins and Cocteau Twins posters to add to his office walls, much to the delight of everyone else (particularly Kramer). Of course, if Eric had more posters of himself, then he wouldn't need to get all of the others!

DILLION MERRZ

Once dubbed "Spider Friend" to all, Dillion has taken on the role of the Chicken Savor. Leading packs of wild hens from crazed farmers, one spectator was heard saying, "What's up with that kid's giblet? I think he plays too many of them there video games." Quite right. Quite right, indeed.

ALEX ANDREWS

Alex took the month off to "find himself" after almost having a nervous breakdown trying to decide between pistachio or chintz drapes for his home. While we haven't heard from him since he left, there have been reports of him turning up in West Hollywood, Fire Island and the Castro District in San Francisco.

Dino Crisis, Driver, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Ape Escape

Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Syphon Filter, Tarzan

Star Ocean, Bloody Roar 2, Street Fighter Alpha 3, Dino Crisis

R4, Um Jammer Lammy, Asteroids, Syphon Filter

FreeCell, Final Fantasy VIII, G.Darius, ThunderForce V.

MLB 2000, Mario Golf, Road Rash 64, NFL Xtreme 2, NFL Blitz 2000

Jade Cocoon, Driver, Bass Landing, Echo Night

Centipede 3D, Interplay Sports Baseball 2000 and Bust a Move '99.

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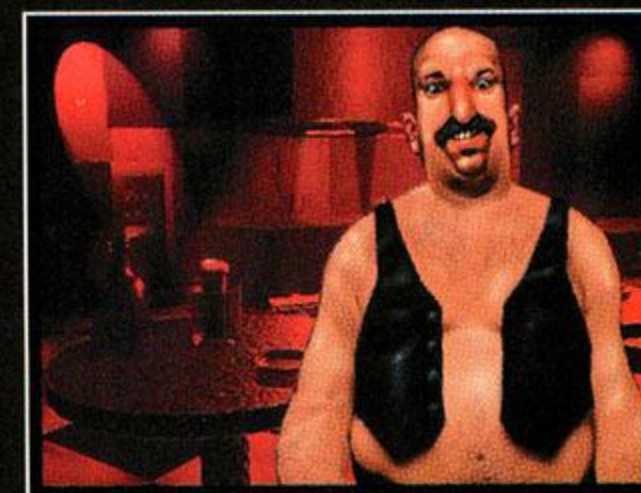
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on the cover



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EXnews

Tired of hearing about PlayStation 2 info? Us neither! All that, plus Konami's Rockin', what the top selling games in Japan are and more government sponsored, anti-violence nuttiness.

EXware

If you're looking to buy some new hardware, you should look right here in this section in order to see what new hardware is available to buy.

EXecute

EXecute is the best section of the magazine. It's where you can find all the latest cheats, hints, tips, codes, Gameshark codes, contest winners, contest rules, prizes, coldcuts and telebellies (sometimes).

EXclusive

Once the exclusive info floodgates are opened, it's kind of hard to stop them from flowing free. Example — amazing never before seen screen shots and descriptive text exists here for Tarzan, Rising Zan, Jet Moto 3, loads of new Midway games, plus an excellent head-to-head emulator review, pitting Bleem! up against CVGS.



EXcerpt

The candid conversations are also flowing fluidly this month, especially since we have nice words with the good people behind Final Fantasy VIII and Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. When you read us talking to them, you may even feel like it's really you asking the questions, since we interview so good.

EXtreme

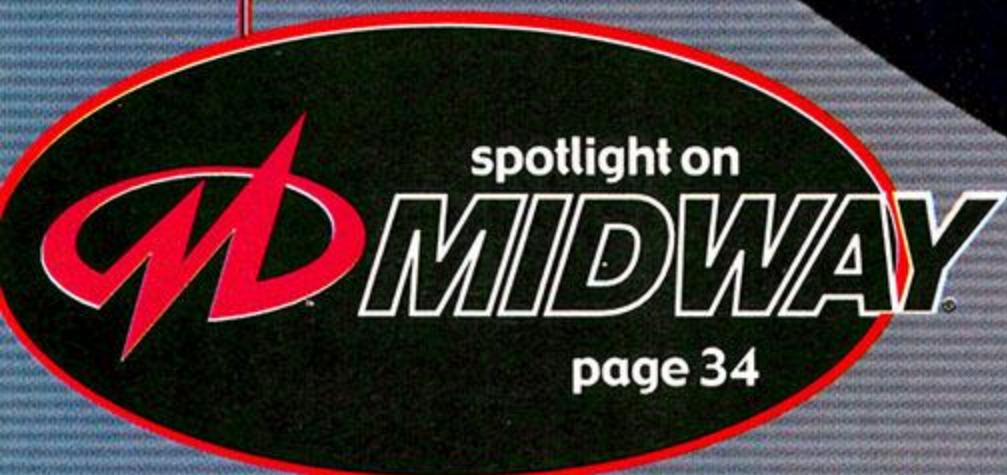
When we get the dinosaur termination urges we, here at DP Wonderland HQ, like to play Dino Crisis from Capcom. It's a really good way to feel lots of suspense and then shoot big, extinct lizards. We'll show pictures, so go lookit the pages.

EXmail

Interesting letters regarding violent games we knew and loved, unplayable Tetris, our new favorite system (Dreamcast), the end of Greg's loneliness, what a PlayStation is, lack of originality and more.

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Midway treats us to a peek at the best of their upcoming PSX titles. Thanks Midway, you guys are the greatest!

EXpecting

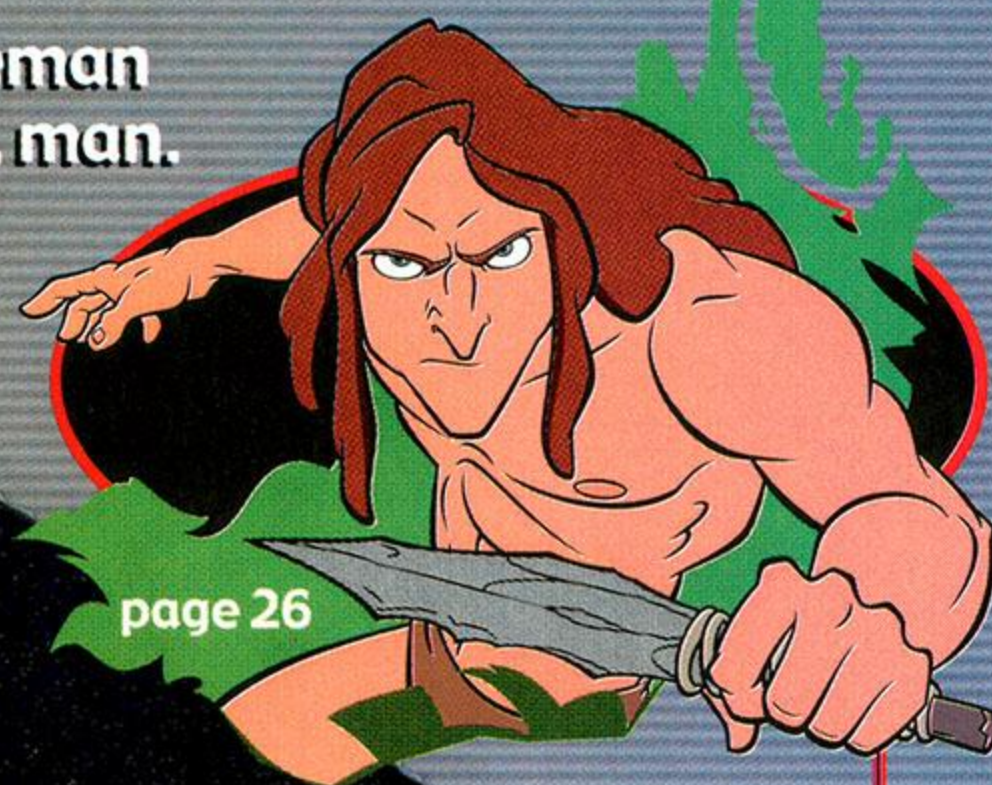
We've put three games on each of our five pages of EXpecting this month. That's fifteen new games, that will be coming out, for you to look at. It's a mighty fine textual-visual experience.

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Extra added Apeman attitude. Tarzan, man.



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EXrated

Every month we rate the games. This month we rate the games. Next month we're going to rate more games. Are we crazy? You decide.

SPorts

La, la, la, la, la. Candy, duck, shock, newt, ham, cheese, chicken, corn. Fred, Bill, Sam, Mark, Doug, Bill, Jack, Phil, Art, Bing, Rod, Lemmy, Mary, Rose, Herman. That's what it's all about.

EXit

In this last editorial page of the book, we will give you some parting thoughts to make you think and maybe send some email. We'll also tell you about what we're planning on putting into the next issue. Bye!

EXhibition

What did we tell you last time you read the text in this very spot? We told you we would bring you part two of our History of Sports games EXhibition. Now, we wouldn't lie to you about something like that, so here we've gone ahead and produced the second half.

FINAL FANTASY VII

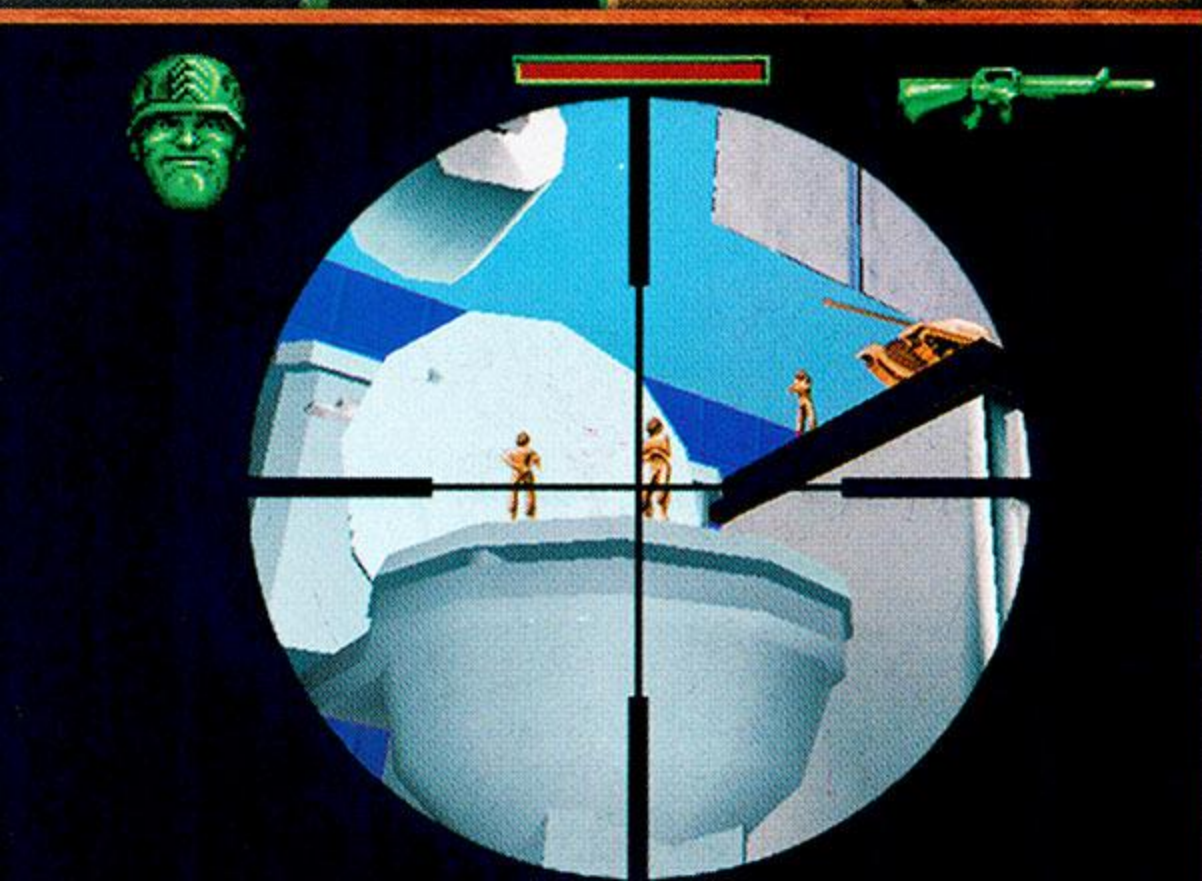
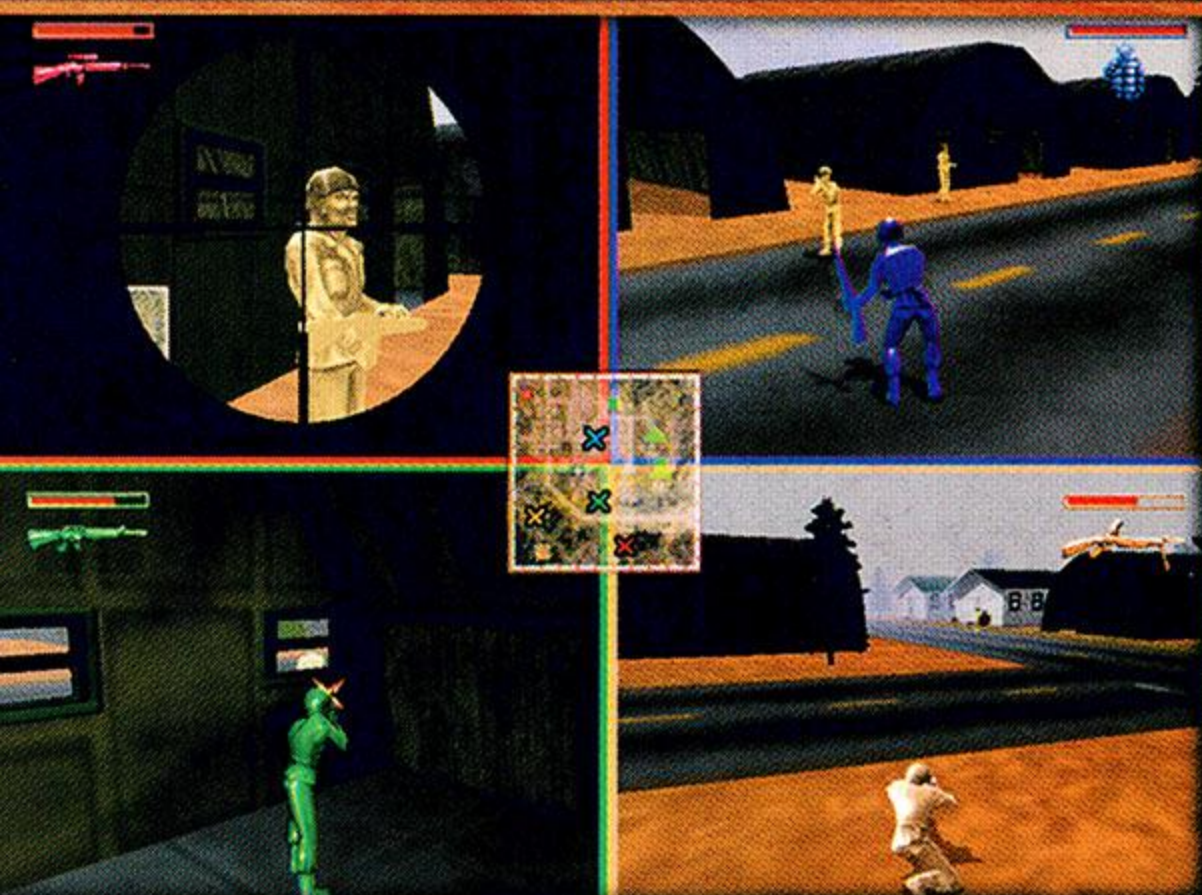
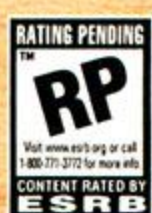
Fancy talk with the Fantasy makers.

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Hot Topic: PC...OR NOT PC?

I distinctly remember the very first time I was told that home videogame systems were a passing fad. The market had just crashed, and all the major videogame magazines which remained in business changed their focus. All of them claimed that the PC was the gaming system of the future that would make home systems obsolete. Now, fifteen years later, home videogame systems are still going strong and all of these magazines are out of business. That hasn't stopped newer magazines from making similar claims, however.

I scoff at the notion that a PC is the game machine of the future, for several reasons. Where is your PC located? Probably not in the family room where visitors are more apt to have access. How many people own a TV with a screen size of 15 inches or less? Not many, but that is the size of the average PC monitor. Even if you have the luxury of a larger monitor, could you comfortably fit four to eight people in front of it?

Choosing a PC game means checking the hardware requirements to make sure you have the proper chip set, sound card, CD-ROM speed, and memory, as well as appropriate input devices. Choosing a console game means you have to check the package for the name of your system. No installation, no configuring and reconfiguring to avoid IRQ and DMA conflicts, no calibrating joysticks — just plug it in, turn it on, and play. While many computer game players enjoy tinkering around with their system (just as car enthusiasts do), I consider that to be a waste of time. I will admit that PC's have a few benefits which consoles lack. PC games access the hard drive, rather than relying upon memory cards, allowing users greater flexibility in saving and customizing programs. The keyboard allows for more varied input and easier data entry than a console controller does. The PC market also has been supportive of add-on/mission disks which extend the life of a software title, without significant expense. Finally, the PC allows for multiplayer gaming over the Internet. While Dreamcast and PlayStation 2 will utilize similar technology, the console market has not yet embraced on-line gaming.

Even so, unless you are a solitary player who enjoys in-depth strategy games which take months or years to play, the benefits of console gaming far outweigh those of PC gaming. Console games are cheaper, easier to set up, less likely to "crash", and more accessible for multiple players. In addition, console games have more longevity. Consider this — I can take out any home videogame system from 15 years ago and still play games on it. After all, these consoles were made to hook into a television set and I still have one of those. On the other hand, how many people still have a 286 or older PC and all its components lying around? It seems that when you upgrade to a new computer, you leave a lot of software behind.

For some reason, the PC vs. console debate still comes up every so often. It shouldn't. While I have nothing in particular against computer games, the all-around best experiences can be had on a console system which was designed solely for that purpose.

—Mark Androvich

Dear PSExtreme,

I am an anthropology grad student and have done some research into the validity of video game violence and its effects on people, primarily children. It has been my experience, as well as others, that there is some form of influence of video games and other forms of popular culture on people. As to what those influenced by these forms of popular culture do is left up to them. I think back to watching Flip Wilson when he used to say "the devil made me do it." I believe the same can be applied here. The "devil" may have suggested something, but it is "you" who has to act upon the suggestion.

I recently watched 60 Minutes (for a brief second until it pissed me off beyond belief). Supposedly, some victims and their families of these numerous school shootings are suing not only the film and video game industry, but such individuals as Marilyn Manson. We, the public, need to understand that these legal actions are nothing more than REACTIONS to what has happened. No matter how many laws and restrictions we pass, no amount of them can change human behavior.

Popular culture is often a reflection of a culture's thoughts, beliefs, understandings, etc... Popular culture isn't killing our children, WE ARE! Popular culture is reflecting what is going on in our society.

I worked for nearly six years for a major computer software and video game retailer. During that time, Night Trap made its foreboding appearance. After Night Trap came the eventual establishment of the video game rating system. What happened next at the store I worked in is unbelievable for many. The company I worked for insisted that we, the workers, "card" every young purchaser of video games that had anything besides the "E" rating. Reluctantly, we did so. Again, what happened next was unbelievable. Kids, not even 10 yet, would come into the store to buy Mortal Kombat and Street Fighter (both of which were very popular at the time). Many sales were refused simply because the kids were too young to buy the "T" and "M" rated games. Within hours, sometimes minutes, the parents, grandparents, or whoever, would drag the kid back into the store, demanding to know why we refused to sell the game to their child. This happened nearly 90% of the time. We explained the rating system and the violent content of the game, yet it all fell on deaf ears. Instead, in order to "keep the customer happy", we sold the games to the parents instead. A week or so later, a company wide memo was sent out for all employees to stop refusing

video game sales based on age restrictions. Many of us asked why. We were told something like "it's all due to some legalities." Rumor had it that a group of people were wanting to sue our company for refusing to sell their kids Mortal Kombat.

So what does this say about our society? I'm not sure. I don't think anyone is sure yet. I believe there are other factors to consider.

It appears that no one is taking into consideration how these disturbed individuals (meaning those involved in the school shootings) were raised. Any grade-school educated person can tell you that parenting is a key factor in child development. I have seen parents (and I use the term loosely) get fed up with their children screaming, crying or simply bugging them and put their kids in front of the TV, to either watch a movie or play some game, so the parents will be left alone. Listen people... WE are supposed to raise our kids, not Mario, not Big Bird, not MTV, and not even Mickey Mouse.

I don't have children of my own, and I have no idea the difficulties involved in raising a child, but I do know that, if the child spends more time with the TV, the child will draw itself closer to the make-believe world of TV and distance itself from their parents.

What I also think is interesting is the lack of influence, mostly negative influence, other countries experience. Take Japan or Great Britain. Do such actions as school shootings occur as often as they do here? Their restrictions on video games and their own popular culture are much less restricted than ours, yet it often appears as though our country is headed for an implosion. What are we doing to ourselves? What are we not doing? Is there not enough religion? Do we take life too seriously? Have we all become so thin skinned that a biting comment from another person will send us to the point of "going postal?" Or do we just, sadly, hate each other?

Blaming video games and anything else accomplishes very little. Popular culture DOES affect us, but it is us who create it and have the power to change it.

I'm not writing this letter in hopes of winning a contest, brag, piss someone off, or whatever. I'm tired of reputable industries taking the blame for bad parenting and a decaying society. I just needed to vent a little. I know not everyone will agree with what I've said, but maybe it will give them something to think about. Thanks for giving me a place other than my wife's poor, tired ear to vent.

Ken A. Allgood

Dear PSExtreme,

As I found out, you can never agree with everything every time, but PSExtreme is still the best for me.

In the last issue, you did an article on a new Tetris. You rated it 90%. I don't agree with this because, with all the Tetris games that have ever been put on the market, nothing has changed. I have found [with some help from my friends] a game called Tetrinet; you can download this for free and I recommend it to you and any one else that like Tetris. You can get it by going to a search engine and looking up Tetrinet. It is Tetris, but up to 6 people can play and there are special balls that appear so you can nuke your blocks away or add a line to the other players game or randomly take blocks away from the other player's game or switch screens with them. That is cool.

I suggest that you check it out; then rate your Tetris again.

Cam Gines

We tried to check it out but we couldn't figure out how to get it to play on our PlayStations. In fact, it looks like a PC game! Hmmm. How can we rate a PC game in our PlayStation magazine? We can't! Oh well, looks like our review of The Next Tetris will have to stand, since there's only one other Tetris game available on the PlayStation (Tetris Plus) and it was a stinker.

Dear PS Extreme,

I am still having a good laugh over the way you made that Dreamcast groupie eat crow over the new Playstation 2 specs, in Exmail. I almost feel sorry for Sega, knowing that their "super system" will be rendered an obsolete dinosaur within a year of the release.

My only concern is the launch price. Sony suggested it would be less than a Pentium III in Japan (about \$850 American). Does that mean it might retail for \$849.99? Or even \$500? Apart from putting together a great console, one of Sony's great achievements is mainstreaming videogaming and making the PS a household name. Isn't there something like one in every two Japanese households? If they have to launch it at too high a price, it could mean trouble, no matter how good it is.

Anyway, I know it's a way off yet, but I hope we can look to you fine folks to give us the same great coverage for PS2 that you do for the original.

Best Wishes,
Dave Z.

Things may be looking up for the Dreamcast. Several large publishers (like Midway and Namco) have shown us some very impressive games for Sega's next "dream" machine. It just may be able to keep us satisfied until the PSX2 is available. We're actually considering starting

some sort of Dreamcast magazine in the near future, so keep an eyeball out for it. As for the retail price of the PSX2, you can bet Sony will want to be competitive, so their machine will have to be affordable.

Dear Greg,

If you are lonely you can play a cool game called Critical Depth for PlayStation.

Eatincrud

By George, that did it! Now he feels like eating Bok Choi all the time; so, send him some, please.

Dear PSExtreme,

You're great. I like your magazines, only I don't get them all. I have some from 1998 and they're still great. I read them all the time. Can you please send me some info about the PlayStation thing? It acts as um, some kind of thing. I heard they're only in Japan. Is this still true? Thanks a lot.

Walterene

Ok, here's some info. It's a grey box that you put CD's into that have black on the bottom and it lets you play games on your TV set if you hook it up with wires. You can purchase this item at stores and mail order places. You can also, sometimes, find them used, in the newspaper, in the classified section. Maybe someone who lives close to you will be selling one and you can buy it, or even just go over to his house to look at it. They are now available in most countries of the world.

Dear PS Extreme,

First off, love the sleek new look. Now, on to your E3 coverage... I can't tell you how disappointed I am with this year's batch of future games; nothing but sequels or clones of other titles, as far as the eye can see. Only Ape Escape and Driver (maybe Omega Boost) look to bring a new and exciting gaming style to the PS. Now granted, many of the games shown will still be excellent (Gran Turismo 2, Um Jammer Lammy), but those players looking for a fresh gaming experience won't find it this year. And what a disappointment to see no light gun games and 2D side scrollers (Tomba 2 in 3-D Aack!) Perhaps the new technology of Playstation 2 will spark fresh ideas for game developers. If not, we may be looking at an Irritating Stick 2...

Richard Diaz

It's not all that bad, now. Sequels are popular for a reason. People like more of what they enjoyed in the original. Besides, games that are truly original are as rare as fingers on chickens.

Dear PSExtreme,

I won't do any sucking up because I can't think of anything good enough to say. Well on to the less important things.

I have Azure Dreams and beat it a couple times. I was wondering why they didn't make another. I really liked how they made something that no other companies could think of. They should make an expansion disk set later in his life. Did Konami not think it was a good enough seller? I know several people who own it. I would appreciate it if you could answer my question.

Loyal Reader
John S.

*Don't give up! They may make one, if enough people make noise. Don't be afraid to write them! Konami of America, Inc.
1400 Bridge Parkway, Suite 101
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Dear PS Extreme,

I have written to you before, you didn't print it but I wasn't upset, I understand. Just have a few questions to ask ya....

- 1) I loved the Kings Field series, will there be a third coming out?
- 2) How long until the PSX2 is coming out?
- 3) Is Star Wars Episode I good enough to purchase?
- 4) I love you man!! Do you love me?

Thanks,
Dale and Linda

- 1) Shadow Tower isn't quite a sequel, but it's close enough. Check it out.
- 2) 1.5 years. September, 2000.
- 3) Mmmmmmm. Not yet. Maybe they'll fix it.
- 4) We can neither confirm nor deny... Well... Ok, yes, we do love you (both), dag-nabbit.

Dear PS Extreme,

I don't play games because I'm too busy with important things like keeping the country running, keeping my family running and just plain running. Real men don't play games. Only kids and geeks play games. I'd tell you "gamers" to get a life, but it's already too late! It passed you by while you sat on your fat (bottoms) mashing buttons and (eating cold cuts).

Joan Krusdet

Ouch! Don't spank us, mamma!

Address all mail to:
EXMAIL
Dimension Publishing
1175 Chess Drive, Suite E
Foster City, CA 94404
e-mail: d3@quake.net
Send Greg some Bok Choi!
He's hungry! OFF@quake.net

The Mail Service
Hold Mail Authorization

PLEASE NOTE: *This service expires 90 days from the stop-mail date.*

Please stop mail for:

Name

Date to Stop Mail

Address

A.

- ☐ Please stop mail until I return.
I will pick up all undelivered
mail.

B.

- ☐ Please resume normal
delivery, and deliver all held
mail, on the date written here.

Date to Resume Delivery

Customer Signature

Official Use Only

Date Received

Clerk

Lot Number

Carrier

Delivery Route Number

If option A is selected please fill out below:

Note to Carrier: All undelivered mail
has been picked up.

Date to Resume Delivery of Mail

Official Signature Only

COMPLIMENTS OF THE STAR OCEAN GAME DEVELOPERS.

YOU'RE GOING TO BE AWHILE.

Too bad there's no "indefinite date" box to check on those post office forms. Since you have no idea when you'll be returning. Everything you do in this game will have an impact on the way the journey ends. If it ever does.

You start on a quest that begins at the edge of the universe. And ends—well, that's entirely up to you. Every single person you meet, every step and every decision you make will ultimately shape your destiny. And the fate of a planet.

In short, the maniacal gods are poised to kill every single living creature with a great meteorite that is quickly and furiously hurtling straight for your planet. Ferocious monsters threaten at every turn. Evil magic lurks in the shadows. And to raise the stakes, questions of identity hang in the balance.

So you must battle against the evil and hideous monsters in real-time, polygonal combat. You can customize complicated combination moves and set up decoys to take the fall. But no matter what, there's still no end in sight.

Because who you choose to talk to and share information with will greatly affect you. Characters can think and feel for themselves. Some will join you on your quest, others will betray you. And to add to the challenge, you have the option of playing two different characters, both unique in personality and both having

an impact on the course of the game.

Even your emotions determine the fate of your journey. You may choose to be romantically linked with another character, or you may choose to remain friends. But no matter what, it will affect your path. And more seriously, if a friend dies in battle, you'll feel incredible rage that will cause you to fight with even more furious combat moves.

And there is no easy way out. Tools and skills do not just appear along the way. You must create many items from raw materials. And to do that you will then find yourself mastering difficult skills like alchemy, metalwork, song-writing, and even cooking.

You will find yourself braving

the countless routes while traveling through this game. And there are over 80 endings. The deeper you delve, the more you'll discover that nothing—no detail, no clue, no conversation, no skill—can be taken for granted. And that anything is possible. Including the fact that you might not ever make it back.

DISCOVER WHAT'S OUT THERE.

STAR OCEAN THE SECOND STORY™



WWW.PLAYSTATION.COM

from around
the globe

NEWS EDITOR: CHRIS KRAMER

Nerd Alert! New "Oscillating Lasers" Used In Plot For World-Domination! We Call It: The "Alan Parsons Project!"

Fellow propellerheads and Star Trek fans alike should dig the news that Sony has gone to the effort of creating a whole new laser device for the PlayStation 2. This new laser can read both DVD and CD formats from the same single unit. Current DVD players have separate lasers for reading the two different disc formats. Just don't point it in your eye or you'll go blind.

Sony's latest high-tech weapon is the first laser that can "oscillate on a single chip with wavelengths of 650 nanometers for DVD and 780 nanometers for CD." That's really, really, really small, and accurate enough to singe those weird little hairs on top of my head from twenty paces. The new gizmo can fire out coherent beams of light that read both types of disc information, greatly reducing the amount of hardware needed in the PlayStation 2 (as well as Sony's other CD-ROM and DVD players). This type of ingenuity should help Sony get the PlayStation 2 down to a more manageable price point. In other words, less jiggly bits inside means cheaper costs for Junior. Thank you Sony! We love you!

PlayStation 2 In Japan By Christmas? "Dear Santa, I Know I Haven't Been Good This Year, But..."

Hot doggies! Sure, we've all drooled at the movies floating through the internet-osphere, and some of us even got close enough to lick the glass of the Magical Pyramid of Happiness at E3 that contained the running demos, but what we all really want is to pick up a controller and actually play something created for the system. Good News: it looks like a select few will get the chance come September. Bad News: only if they can make it to Japan. D'Oh!

Sony just busted out with the knowledge that instantly transformed the always splendiferous Tokyo Game Show into the ultimate Gaming Dope Show. TGS runs from September 17 to the 19 and, during that time, Sony will unveil the actual next generation PlayStation, along with several games and demos. Yowza!

Most importantly, Ken Kutaragi revealed in an interview with a Japanese newspaper that manufacturing of the Emotion Engine, the heart of the PSX 2, began in July and that production of the actual systems will begin in Japan in October.

Of course, the powers-that-be declined to inform us as to which games will actually be on the show floor for nerds (like the majority of the staff at PS Extreme) who travel all way to Tokyo. But we don't really care, we're going anyway! We may even right about the experience in the October issue of PS Extreme, so don't cancel your subscription yet.

Why Does Connecticut Keep Re- Electing Senator Lieberman?

Aren't there any other concerns in the great state of Connecticut? Don't they have homeless people, pollution or gangs of gun-toting, glue-huffing, teenage Leonardo DiCaprio fans there like we do here in California? Just what the heck goes on in Connecticut that allows one of their Senators to spend so much of his time being concerned about video games? Evidently, nothing much.

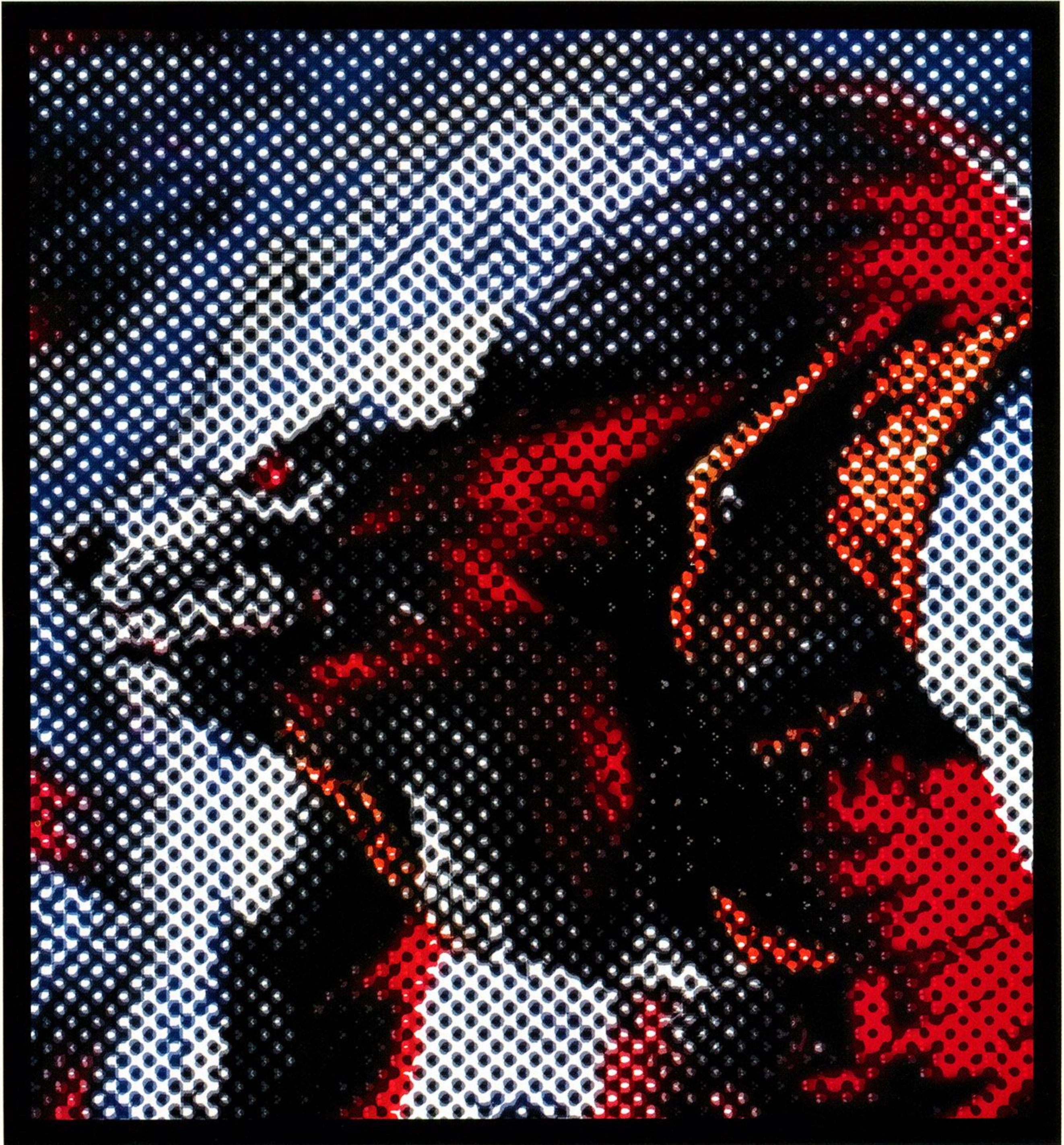
Senator Joseph "I Play Quake Naked" Lieberman is once again leading the charge against video games, which is roughly about as important in the world-wide political/socio/economic and spiritual scheme of things as pushing for legalization of Beanie Baby neutering. This time, Democratic superstar Lieberman is spearheading a movement to amend the Federal Cigarette and Advertising Act to create a unified rating system for violence in video games, movies and music. The amendment is handily called "The Twenty-First Century Media Responsibility Act," which would require a label warning of violence and violent content in any media. That's great, 'cause if we see one more crappy Steven Segal movie without a warning, we're gonna freakin' KILL somebody!

The bill is structured to keep violent images away from kids in much the same way that the government tries to keep pornography away from them. The bill also is intended to make publishers and retailers enforce the ratings system at the retail level. But what's to stop Dan Rather from silently mouthing the phrase "oral sex" every time he interviews Bill Clinton? And who is going to stand up for all the real victims, all those bad songs from the Eighties that Puff Daddy keeps mangling and killing for a profit? And what about Mariah Carey hemlines? Who's gonna protect the kids from images of her slightly sweaty, exposed satiny thighs? Makes us violent just writing the words! Jeez!

Next time you pass by an arcade game in the mall or movie theater, make sure that you stop and watch the game scroll through its attract mode. Eventually, you'll notice a little message screen pop up that says words to the effect of, "Kids — don't do drugs or I'll kill you. Love, Uncle Sam." This little blurb is the result of similar forward thinkers in our duly-elected government, intended to remind children, between bouts of Mortal Kombat spine-shredding and House of The Dead murder-simulating, not to smoke crack. Thank goodness we live in a Great Democracy, where less than half of the people turn out to vote for government officials who spend their time working on such effective measures. Almost makes you want to give up and become a Communist, except they aren't going to be able to play PlayStation 2 games.

Psychological Test #7— Discovering your inner self.

Q: Do you see a ballerina in worn slippers and pink tutu smelling a faded rose?



☐ Yes, I see the ballerina. I also happen to wear my pants too tight.

☐ No, I see the noble savage that lurks deep in my subconscious mind – after all, man is a combination of the sophisticated and the primitive, of the learned and the instinctual. Bloody Roar™ II is the perfect outlet for my animal aggression. Every scorching slash, pulverizing punch and bone-cracking combination is rendered with deadly clarity. I can morph into multiple beasts, including hidden monstrous warriors. I can even create my own devastating fighting combinations. We should never try to deny the animal. We need to unleash the beast within us all or die trying.

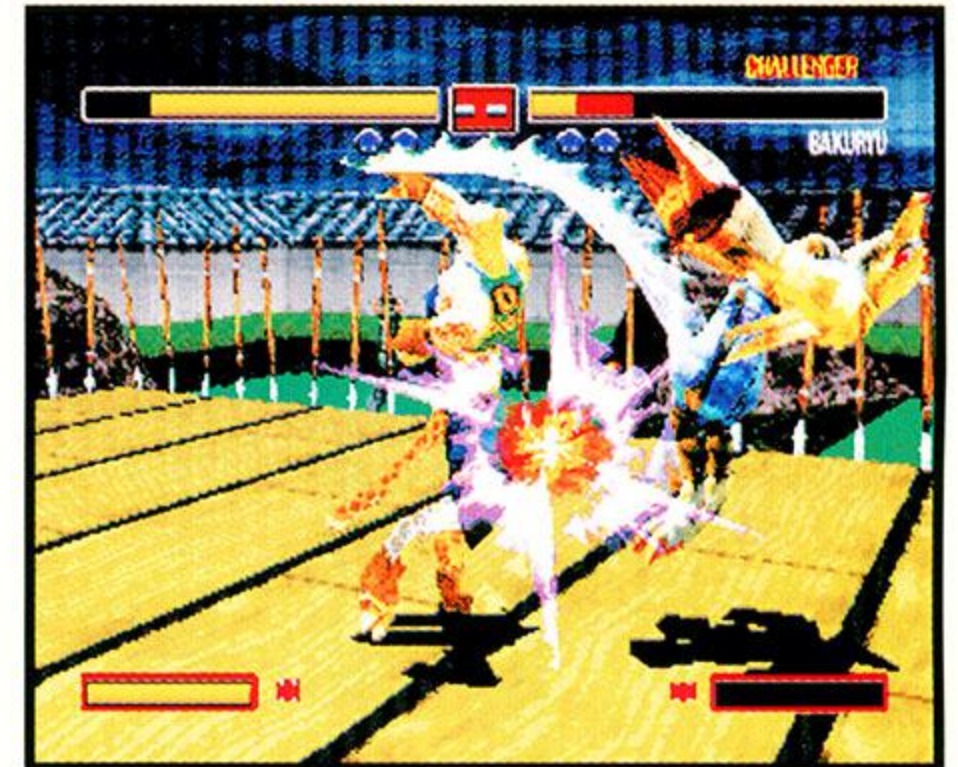


Fig. (a)



Fig. (b)



Fig. (c)



www.playstation.com



When Does 23 Go Into 77.5 Million? When Sony Computer Entertainment Releases Japanese Sales Numbers. Ka-Ching!

Why is Sony such a huge and profitable corporation? Because they make royalty money from every single PlayStation game sold. And, according to these numbers, recently released from SCEI, there were a heck of a lot of PlayStation games sold in Japan this past year. Here are the numbers:

Triple Platinum Award - More Than 1 Mill. Sold
Final Fantasy VIII (Square)

Platinum Award - At Least 1 Mill. Sold
Xi (SCE)
Densha de Go! (Taito)
Crash Bandicoot 3 (SCE)

Gold Award - At Least 500K Sold
FIFA Road to World Cup 98 (EA/Square)
Final Fantasy VII International (Square)
Densha de Go! 2 (Taito)
Brave Fencer Musashiden (Square)
Powerful Pro Yakyu 98 Kaimaku-hen (Konami)

Star Ocean: 2nd Story (Enix)
Metal Gear Solid (Konami)
R4: Ridge Racer Type 4 (Namco)
Chocobo no Fushigina Dungeon 2 (Square)
Simple 1500: The Mahjong (Culture Publishers)
Genso Suikoden 2 (Konami)
Monster Farm 2 (Tecmo)
BeatMania (Konami)
Dance Dance Revolution (Konami)
Street Fighter Zero 3 (Capcom)
Tales of Phantasia (Namco)
World Soccer Jikkyo Winning Eleven (Konami)
Saga Frontier 2 (Square)
Um Jammer Lammy (SCE)

Now, let's do some quick calculations, based solely on these 23 games (and not the other hundred or so titles that also came out). Since we have no way of determining Sony's actual royalty structures with all these companies, we'll insert a nice, round five dollars as the unknown factor, figuring that some companies (like Square and Konami) probably paid less, while other companies (like Tecmo and Enix) probably paid more. FF VIII sold three million, the Platinum Category offers up another three million, while the Gold rings in an impressive 9.5 million games.

Altogether, we have 15.5 million games times five dollars a pop, which comes out to (roughly, of course, and in no way to be considered official by any means) 77.5 million dollars. Figure that Sony Japan made almost enough to finance the cost of producing "The Phantom Menace" just from these 23 titles alone. And you wonder why Sega keeps trying to get back into the hardware business? If we thought more than twenty of you out there would buy a 128-bit "PS Extreme MegaFunConnection Turbo," we'd release our own damn hardware and retire to a private, secluded island in the South Pacific, where we'd be worshiped as gods by the cannibals and cargo cults that we'd oppress with our "magical powers" over fire and Ballpark Franks (us: "Look, they plump when you cook 'em!", hapless villagers: "Oooooohhh!").

from around the globe

Konami Born To Rock PlayStation

After a brief journey to the exceedingly clean streets of Japan, you can draw only one conclusion about the Japanese; they're quite the musical people. Each and every arcade overflows with music-based games like Beatmania! (which is so popular that Japanese bands are literally lining up to get their songs in new versions), Bust-A-Move, Dance Dance Revolution, Pop'n Music and one of the newest games, Konami's Guitar Freaks.

Guitar Freaks is another Simon-type game, with a setup very much like Konami's Beatmania! and Dance Dance Revolution. Instead of a turntable or dance pad, you have a mini guitar with buttons on the neck. Basically, notes zip up the top of the screen, where you need to press the correct button and wail away in order to "play" them. The notes come in faster and faster waves, prompting rapid guitar flailing and mucho embarrassment in front of tittering crowds of Japanese school kids who are way better at the game than your unmusical ass will ever be. In Japan, Konami has already released PlayStation versions of Beatmania! and Dance Dance, with special controllers for both the games (a mini-turntable and a floor pad that you dance on). Konami now intends to follow up with a PlayStation version of Guitar Freaks, including a little guitar that you can plug into your console. Finally, a chance for all you closet rockstars to bang your head, PlayStation style!

Some may recall that Sony released a product called the "V-Pick" earlier this year in Japan, which received very little attention. In fact, the peripheral only had a single, miserable game produced that utilized it, called Stolen Song, which was so bad that no one in Japan will actually talk about it. The V-Pick was a tiny electronic guitar pick that allowed you to air-guitar away on a tennis racket and was mucho lame-o. Konami's Guitar Freaks, while almost as dopey, is a much more entertaining party game. No word yet on whether this goofy music game will make it here in the states.

top-selling titles

Namco's Ridge Racer Type 4 1 last month: ** average retail price: \$41	989 Studios' Syphon Filter 2 last month: 3 average retail price: \$41	EA's Need For Speed: High Stakes 3 last month: 1 average retail price: \$41	Capcom's Street Fighter Alpha 3 4 last month: ** average retail price: \$39	EA's Triple Play 2000 5 last month: 2 average retail price: \$41
989 Studios' MLB 2000 6 last month: 4 average retail price: \$40	989 Studios' 3xtreme 7 last month: ** average retail price: \$40	3DO's Army Men 3D 8 last month: 5 average retail price: \$41	Square/EA's Ehrgeiz 9 last month: ** average retail price: \$42	Namco's Namco Museum Vol. 3 10 last month: 9 average retail price: \$20

MAY, 1999

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games Tracking Service
900 West Shore Road, Port Washington, NY 11050
(516) 625-2294

The ratings reflected above are those of Dimension Publishing and do not represent the opinions of NPD TRSTS.

** Not in Top 10 Last Month

Evaluating PlayStation accessories is fun; but you'd be amazed at the amount of utter junk that shows up each month, here at the magazine. While some items sound really cool in an advertisement — such as the Super GB Booster, reviewed this month — they don't always turn out as expected. Buyer beware.

Remember that EXware is also your forum. This is where you can ask general hardware questions or air complaints about a specific product that's been giving you trouble. Have you purchased something that didn't work as it should? Let us know.

All EXware questions should be sent via email to PSEXware@aol.com. If you are a PlayStation vendor and would like to have your accessories reviewed in EXware, you should also contact the email above.

Colored Cases

National Console Support

MSRP: \$29.95

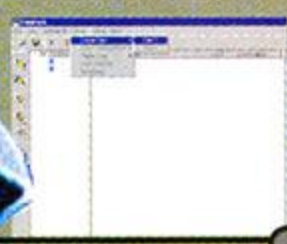


On-line retailer NCSX (www.ncsx.com) recently began shipping custom PlayStation game cases. Available in clear, clear black, clear blue, clear purple, clear red and neon green, the cases are designed to fit any American or Japanese PlayStation from the 500x models to the 750x models.

Changing the case is fairly simple. The whole process took approximately 25 minutes to complete, here at the Dimension offices. The only tool required is a standard Phillips screwdriver. Once the motherboard has been released, you just lift it up and place it in the new casing. Transfer the power supply over, screw everything back together and you're done. We did have one tense moment with the CD-Rom ribbon cable, but, aside from that, the process was easy.

So why doesn't the case get a gold rating? Because it isn't built exactly like the original. The replacement cases are not 100 percent replicas of the original PlayStation case. Getting everything back together required a bit of prodding and pulling on my part. Once it was all back together, the new case worked, but the Power button was slightly off. Turning the PlayStation on and off became somewhat of a chore and no adjusting could solve the problem.

If you're looking for a cheap, and non-destructive, way to customize your PlayStation, this is the way to go. The cases may not be perfect, but they are terribly cool and they go well with the colored Dual Shocks, reviewed last month.



Data Deck

Mad Catz

MSRP: \$29.95

Imitation may be the sincerest form of flattery, but only if you do it well.

The Mad Catz Data Deck is supposed to be a "better" version of Interact's Dex Drive (Platinum, PS Extreme Feb '99). Instead, it is simply a pale imitation of the original.

Physically, the Data Deck is bigger than the Dex Drive, about twice as big. The Data Deck can accommodate two memory cards at the same time, allowing for direct card to card copying. This second card slot is the only advantage the Data Deck has over the Dex Drive.

The first strike against the Data Deck is general speed. Everything about the unit is slow. Reading a card is slow. Writing to a card is slow. You could sit and watch a Chia Pet grow, while waiting for the Data Deck to finish an operation.

The second strike against the Data Deck is the terrible user interface. The explorer software included with the Deck is unintuitive and clunky. Operations that should be simple require a number of steps that leave you thinking "Why?" To its credit, the Data Deck software can import Dex Drive saves, but this is more out of necessity than anything else (how many Data Deck save sites can you find on the web?).

The third, and final strike against the unit is the lack of compatibility. Sure, you can import Dex Drive saves, but you can't export them. This makes trading saves with friends over the Internet a difficult thing to do.

In the end, the Data Deck just isn't worth the cash. In order to compete with an established standard you have to release a better product. The Data Deck is passable, but by no means better than the Dex Drive.

Multi AV x4

Nyko

MSRP: \$19.95



It may not be the most glamorous product, or the most high-tech, but it is one of the most useful accessories to ever cross our desks, here at Dimension.

The Nyko Multi AV x4 is a switch box, which allows you to hook up four different audio/visual devices to one television. This is a godsend for those of us with more than one system. DVD players and VCRs all taking up room.

Connections to the Multi AV are simple. Plug your systems into the front of the unit and connect the back of the Multi AV to the input on your television. Then, via a slider switch on the top of the unit, you can click back and forth between any of the connected inputs.

Video quality on the Multi AV was very good, with no noticeable loss of quality when compared to a direct A/V connection. There was no ghosting, even when multiple inputs were turned on and feeding a live signal to the switch box.

About the only thing missing from the Multi AV is S-Video capability (like ASCII's AV Selector). A switch this nice shouldn't be limited to standard composite inputs. Hopefully Nyko will include S-Video connections in the next revision of the Multi AV. Another nice touch would have been the inclusion of some Velcro mounting strips. As it is, the adapter just sits on the ground beside the TV.

If you have more than one system in your house, consider picking up a switch box. The disappearance of the wire mess is worth almost any price.



Super GB Booster

Innovation

MSRP: \$49.95

If there is one thing that Nintendo has done right, it is hand-held games. Love it or hate it, the Game Boy has made millions of dollars for the big N. One of the problems with the Game Boy, however, has always been the screen. A little LCD panel just can't compete with a 27" TV.

The Super GB Booster promises to play all of your Game Boy games in living color on your TV, via the PlayStation. While it sounds great in theory, the execution is simply horrible.

The booster connects to the PlayStation, via the parallel port on the back of the system. Game Boy carts connect directly to the booster. Turning on the PlayStation with the booster connected will automatically start the game.

The good news is, the booster does work. The bad news is, it doesn't work as promised. First of all, there is no sound. This little fact is not mentioned on the box. Another problem is the lack of support for color games even though the box states that it works with Game Boy Color games; this smacks of false advertising.

As if the lack of sound and lack of color compatibility isn't enough, the Super GB Booster is also not 100 percent compatible. It appears to run the games by copying the cart to memory and then running from there. This means it is impossible to load or save a game to a cart — very annoying for long games like Pokemon or Zelda. The GB Camera also does not work with the booster.

While it is a cool novelty for the first ten minutes, the novelty quickly wears off and you soon realize the \$50 you just spent on the booster was wasted cash.

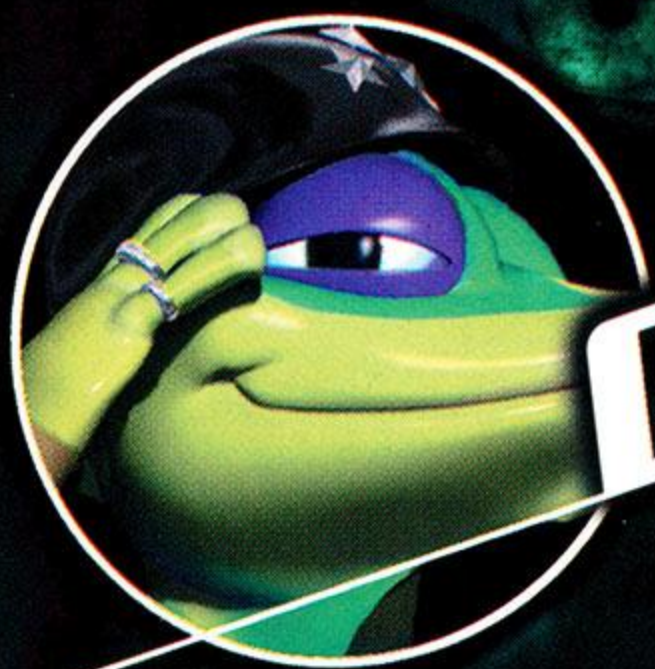
V-MEM Virtual Memory Card System

Interact

MSRP: \$39.95



Interact's V-Mem plugs into the expansion port on the back of the PlayStation and provides the same storage space as 60 regular memory cards. Once installed, you activate it by holding down any button on the controller, as you turn on the PlayStation. A new interface screen will appear and allow you to select the virtual memory cards you want to place in each of the system's two ports. You can still choose to load and save games on a regular memory card, and you can transfer saved game files between regular and virtual memory cards, using the normal PlayStation memory card management interface. The sixty virtual cards cannot be given names, unfortunately, but you can view the usual saved game icons, to find out which card you want to "install", before proceeding to play your game.



GEX 3:
Deep Cover Gecko



Tomb Raider
I and II Now in Greatest Hits



Legacy of Kain
Soul Reaver



Urban Chaos



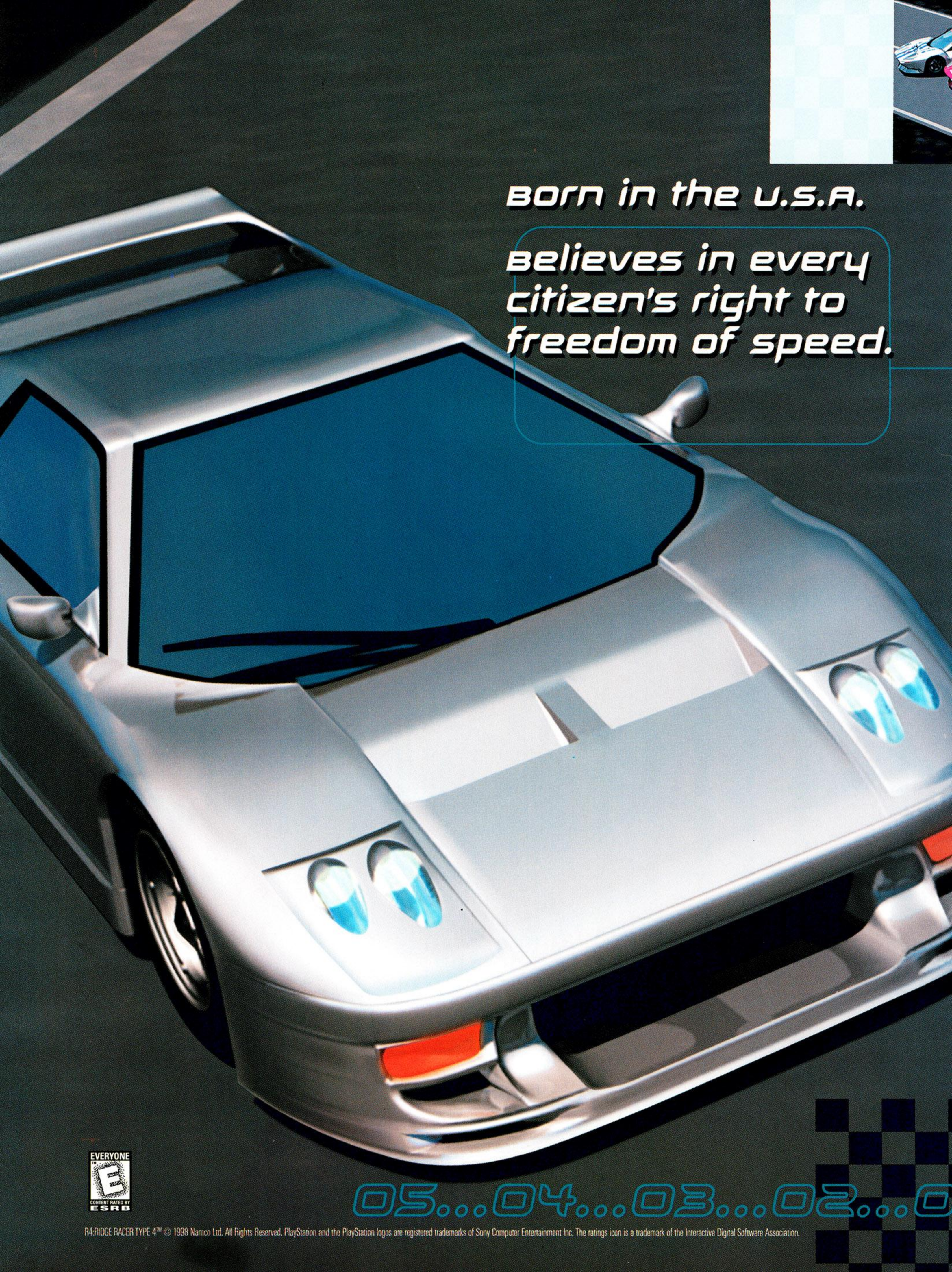
Omikron
The Nomad Soul

Games with Character

www.eidosinteractive.com



EIDOS
INTERACTIVE



BORN in the U.S.A.

*believes in every
citizen's right to
freedom of speed.*



05...04...03...02...01

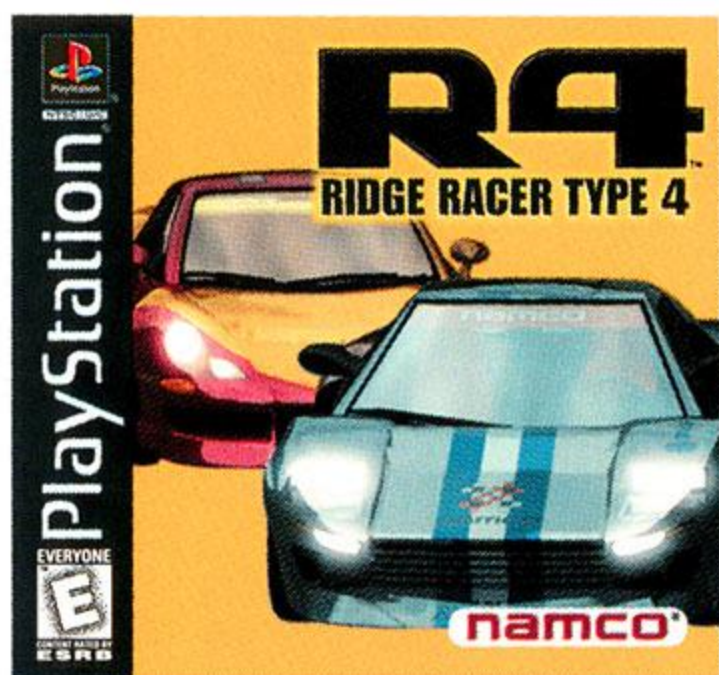


"R4 has to be the best-looking PlayStation racer ever (yes, edging out even Gran Turismo)."

- Official PlayStation Magazine, December 1998

"The first great racer of 1999 could be a *Gran Turismo Killer*."

- Official PlayStation Magazine, February 1999



It boasts an American stock car pedigree. Built Tallahassee tough and water-moccasin fast. Its muscle-bound V8 unleashes 317 stampeding horses, as well as unlimited "Yee-Haa's!". It is the Detector - just one of the automotive marvels that torches the streets in R4. With over 300 new cars, 45 fantasy models, 8 thrilling courses, a 2-player split-screen mode and only one way to drive. Fast. R4's asphalt gulping graphics and spectacular racing environments deliver racing speeds that were once deemed impossible. But not anymore. Now you've got R4. So long, pardner.



Think fast. Drive faster.

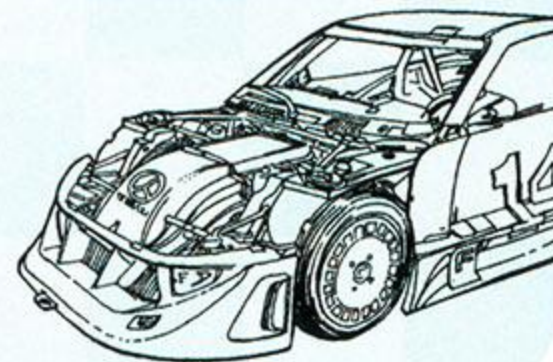
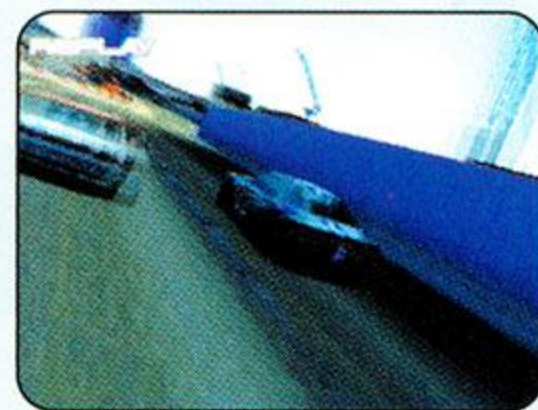
namco
www.namco.com

- Sensational graphics and lighting effects give every race a cinematic feel

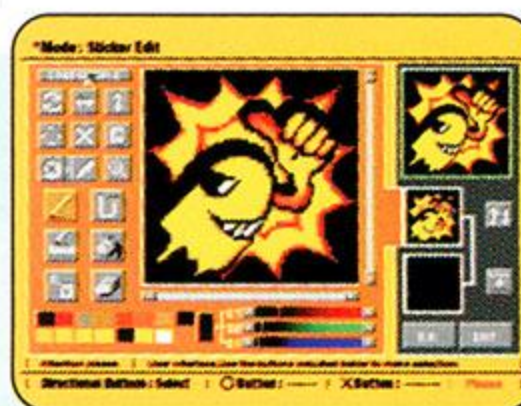
- Race at all times of day and night, even during dramatic sunsets

- Relive your greatest moments through the dynamic-camera replay mode

- Watch your race with all-new motion-blur effects



- Battle head-to-head in split-screen vs. mode



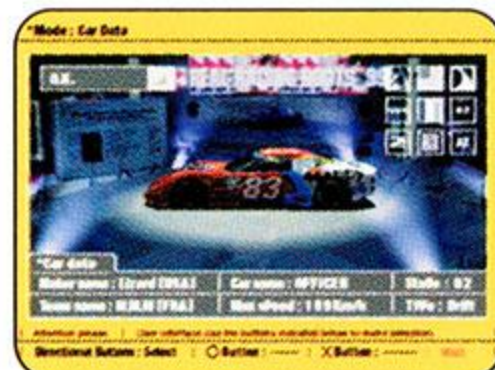
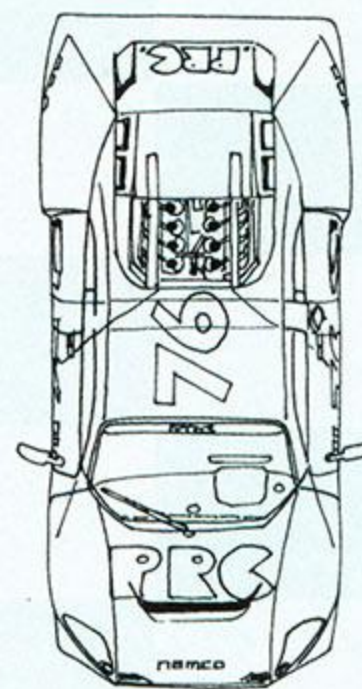
- Speed-tuned physics keep the arcade-style action fast-paced

- Championship performances unlock secret hidden supercars

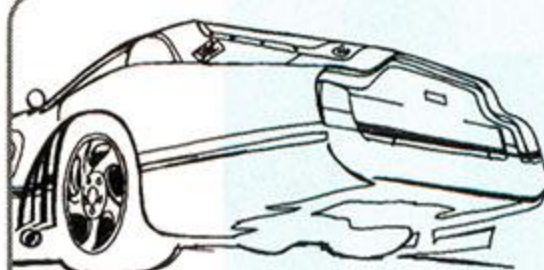
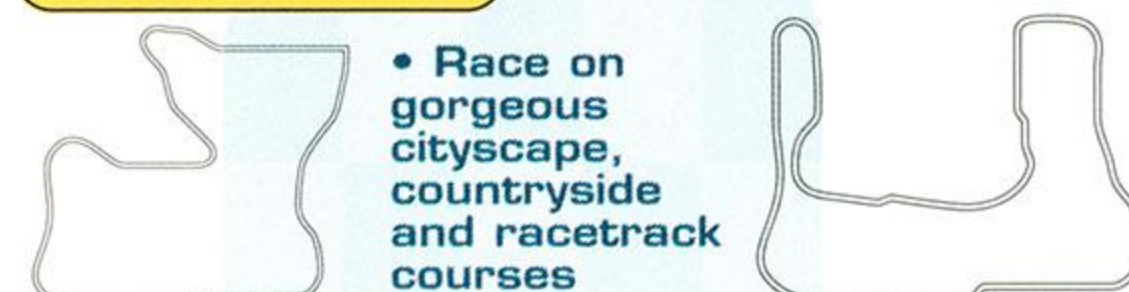
- Don't be afraid to bump the other car, it's all part of a winning strategy

- Join one of four international race teams - each with individual strengths and weaknesses

- Design original logos to customize your car



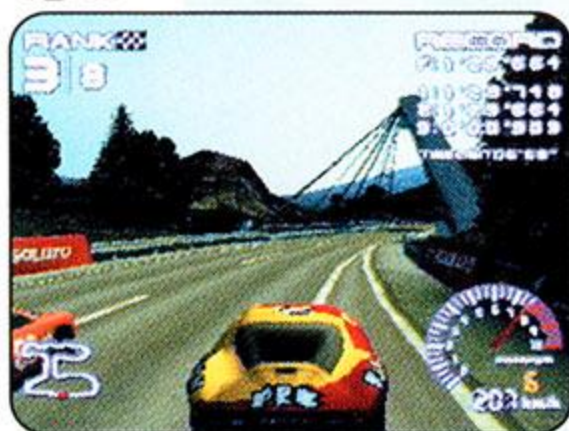
- Race on gorgeous cityscape, countryside and racetrack courses



- Money can't buy victory. You've got to earn new cars with your race performance

- Experience all the ups and downs of a full racing season in the Grand Prix mode

- Includes a Ridge Racer Turbo Mode bonus disc with 8 60 FPS tracks



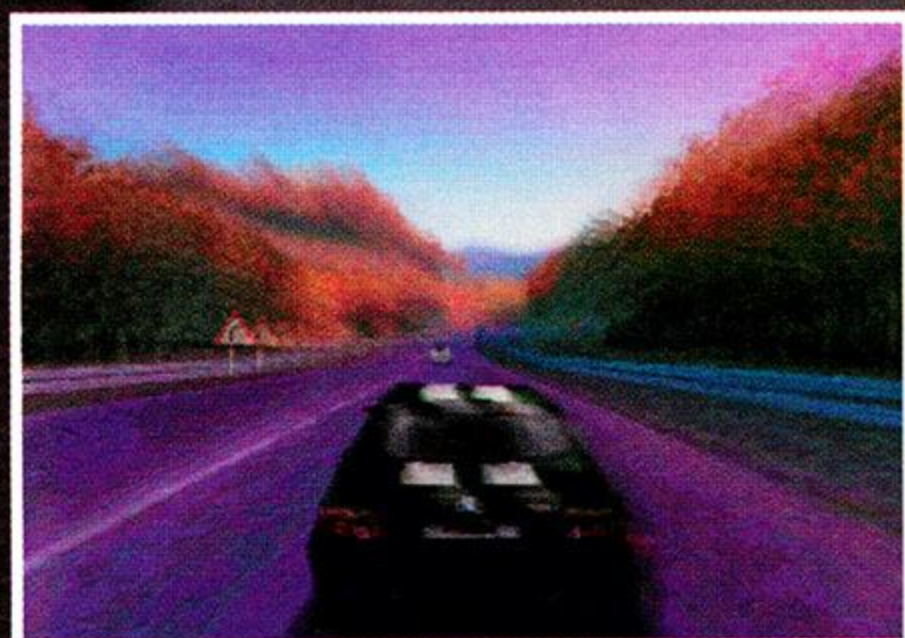
SEND US YOUR CODES AND WIN BIG PRIZES!

Each month we'll pick the best code sent in by our loyal and intelligent readers and send that person a brand spanking new copy of AGETEC's hot destruction game for the PlayStation, **Armored Core: Project Phantasma** or, if you're funky-funky, fresh, AGETEC's **ASCII Sphere 360** (you decide). But wait! That's not all: if you act now, we'll also include AGETEC's super stylish **ASCII Grip one-handed controller** for the PlayStation, for your controlling pleasure, **PLUS twelve (12) free issues** of the best, the first, monthly dedicated PlayStation magazine, **PSExtreme**, of course! Whoa! That's a lot of cool stuff for just a code; what are you waiting for?

WE HAVE A WINNER!

Great, green, gobs of greasy, grimey gurkins! **Greg Roberts from Selma, IL**, found us these additional codes for **Need for Speed: High Stakes**. We thought we had seen all the codes available, then BLAM! here comes Greg with a whole parcel of new codes. Whoa.

Need for Speed: HS



UNLOCK POLICE CARS

Go to Options, User Name, and type "Nfs Pd". Make sure to include the space.

EASY CASH

You'll need two memory cards. First, copy your game onto a 2nd card. Go to High Stakes with both cards inserted. Make sure the card that you want your game on is in slot 1. Start the race and with the 2nd controller, retire. Now you will have two of the same car and can sell the spare.

HEAVY CAR

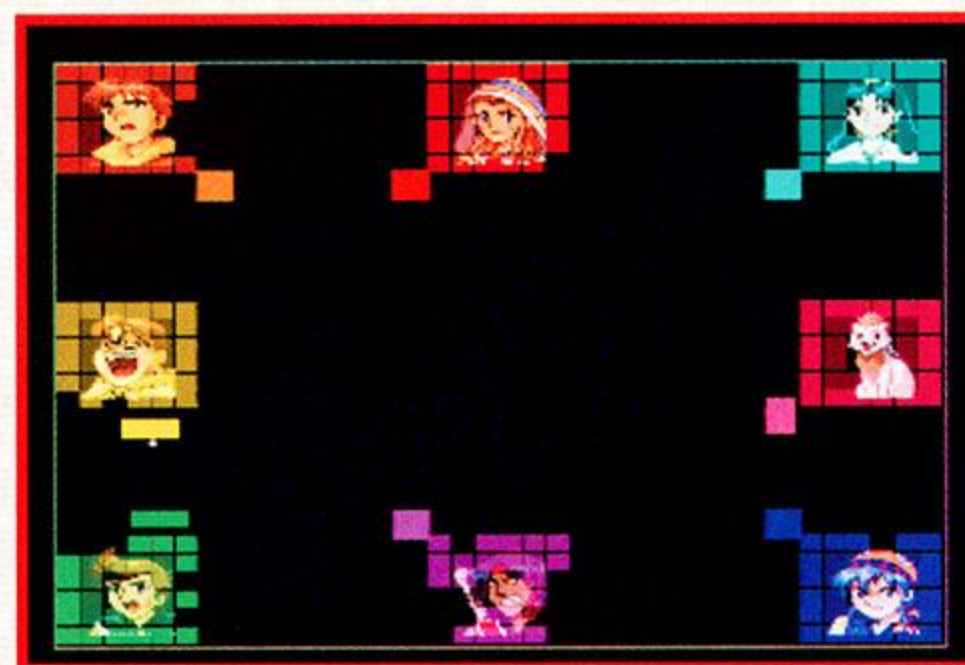
Hold **Left Stick + Circle + Square** after you hit the "Race" button and during the entire loading screen. This allows you to ram anyone out of your way. Including police and traffic cars.

DRUNK DRIVING

After selecting a car and choosing "Race", hold **Left Stick + L2 + R1** until the race screen appears.

CONTEST RULES: Anyone of any age can enter. The only people not eligible to win are employees of Dimension Publishing or AGETEC, their friends, family, pets and anyone they talk to or know of. Dimension Publishing reserves the right to make any and all decisions regarding the contest. One winner per month will be chosen, at Dimension Publishing's discretion, based on the code or trick supplied by the entrant. If you win but do not specify, in your code submission, which prize you want to receive, then we will choose for you.

Lunar



PLAY WARLORDS PLEASE

Insert the "making of" disc. When the FMV sequence of the making of game begins, press **Up, Down, Left, Right, Triangle, Start**.

Codes submitted by Mark Johnson

Roll Away



LIMITED INVINCIBILITY

Enter this code during the game:

Up, Down, L1, R2, R1, Circle, Triangle, Square.

30 MORE SECONDS IN TIME TRIAL

Enter this code during the game:

Circle, L1, Triangle, Triangle, Circle, X, Triangle, Down. This will only work once per level.

JUMP TO BONUS STAGE

Enter this code during the game:

Triangle, Up, Triangle, L2, L1, L2, Square, X.

CLEAR SCREEN DURING BONUS STAGE

Enter this code during the game:

Up, Circle, Square, L1, Square, Circle, Circle, Square.

GET 30,000 MORE POINTS

Enter this code during the game:

Square, Up, Down, L2, R1, Triangle, X, Triangle.

Codes submitted by Mark Johnson

Civilization 2



UNLIMITED MONEY

After creating a city, choose the "City" option. Rename your city to "_Cash". Hold

R1 while entering the "H" in "_Cash". You'll now start with 30,000 gold. Repeat as needed.

Codes submitted by Darth Mole

R-Type Delta



REFILL FORCE POWER

Pause the game, then hold **L2** and press **Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Up, Down + Triangle**.

RED POWER-UP

Collect a Force Pod, then pause the game, hold **L2** and press **Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Up, Down + Square**.

BLUE POWER-UP

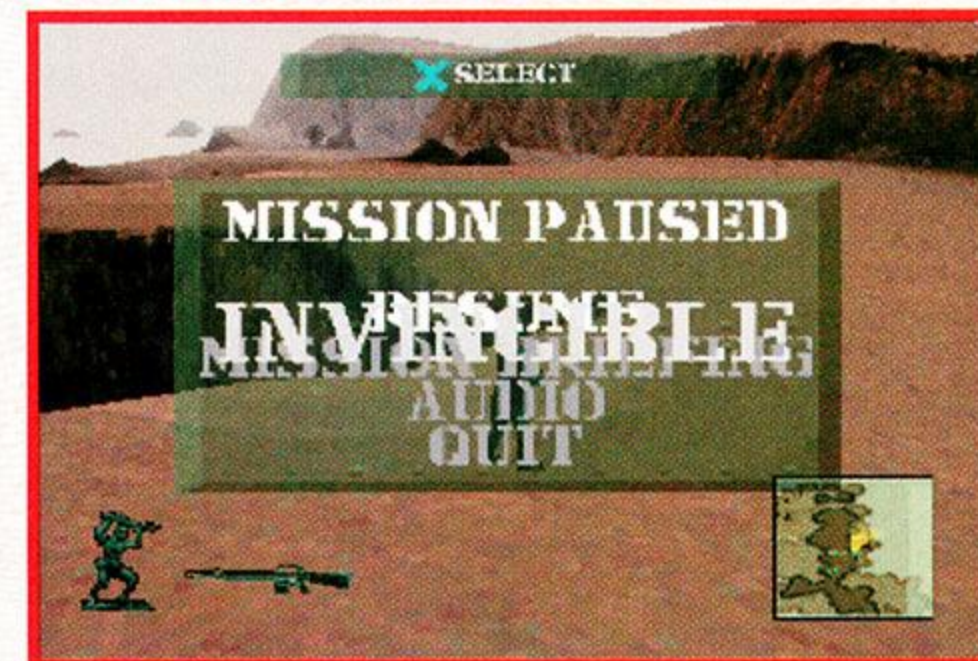
Collect a Force Pod, then pause the game, hold **L2** and press **Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Up, Down + X**.

YELLOW POWER-UP

Collect a Force Pod, then pause the game, hold **L2** and press **Left, Right, Up, Down, Left, Up, Down + Circle**.

Codes stolen from www.cheatcc.com

Army Men 3D



LEVEL SELECT

At the main menu, quickly press **Square, Circle, R1, L1, L1 + R1**.

ALL WAR ZONES

Select "Options", then enter the "Difficulty" selection screen. Then, hold **Triangle + Square + Circle** and press **L1 + L2**.

INVINCIBILITY

Pause the game and quickly press **Square, Circle, L1, L1 + L2**. Then, Sarge will be invincible during the current level. Alternatively, pause the game and press **R1, L1, R1 + R2** within two seconds.

ALL WEAPONS

Pause the game and quickly press **Square, Circle, R1, L1, R1 + R2**. Then, Sarge will have access to all the weapons during the current level. Alternatively, pause the game and press **L1, L1 + L2** within two seconds.

RUN FASTER IN MULTI-PLAYER MODE
Hold **□** + **△** to chase your opponent quicker.
Codes submitted by Fargo Nordikota

Ehrgeiz



ALTERNATE COSTUMES
At the arcade mode character selection screen, hold Up while selecting a fighter.
Codes submitted by Jon Walker

Street Fighter Alpha 3



PLAY AS EVIL RYU AND GUILE
Select World Tour mode, then build your character to level 30 and 31.

PLAY AS SHIN GOUKI
Select World Tour mode, then build your character to level 32 and defeat all Gouki's. Then on the character selection screen, highlight Akuma, hold **L2** and press any button.

DRAMATIC AND FINAL BATTLE MODE
Beat Arcade mode on difficulty level 8.

FIGHT SUPER AKUMA IN FINAL BATTLE MODE
Select Final Battle mode. Then, select a character and hold **L1** + **L2** before the versus screen appears.

BONUS MODES
Beat Dramatic Battle mode with Ryu/Ken and Juni/Jill to unlock two bonus modes.

CLASSICAL MODE
Accumulate three hours of game play on the timer in the options menu. Then at the character selection screen, highlight a character and press Select to play the classic version of their character.

SAIKYO (LOW GUARD METER) MODE
Accumulate four hours of game play on the timer in the options menu. Note: Saikyo Karin does not have the ability to do a 99% throw. Alternatively, beat arcade mode on difficulty level 7.

MAJI (LO) MODE
Accumulate five hours of game play on the timer in the options menu. Alternatively, beat arcade mode on difficulty level 7.

ALL MODES
Accumulate ninety-six hours of game play on the timer in the options menu to unlock all modes.

ALTERNATE INTRODUCTION SEQUENCE
Accumulate forty-eight hours of game play on the timer in the options menu. Then, instead of showing the arcade characters, the opening sequence will show all the new characters (including Guile and Evil Ryu). Alternatively, unlock all character endings including the bonus characters.

ALTERNATE BALROG
Beat World Tour mode without unlocking Evil Ryu or Guile. Then at the character selection screen in any mode, highlight Balrog, hold **L2** and press any button.
Codes submitted by Jon Walker

Chocobo Racing IMPORT

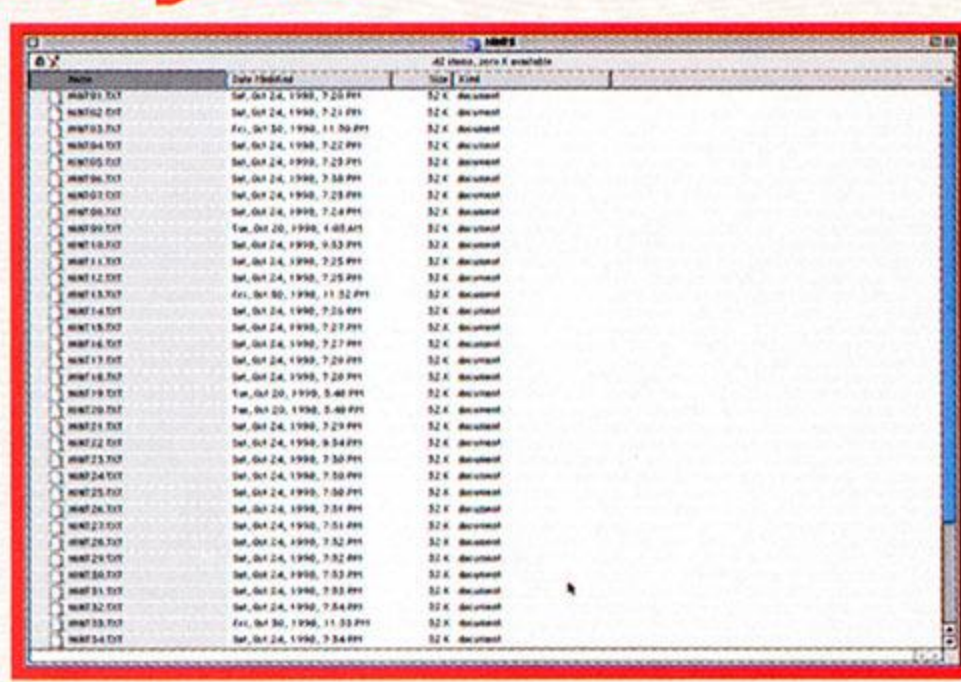


BONUS CHARACTERS
A bonus character is unlocked each time story mode is successfully completed. Then at the character selection screen, highlight Squall and press the indicated button(s) to play as the corresponding character:

#comp.	Character	Code
3	Cid	L1
4	Mumba (FFVIII)	L2
5	Cloud (FFVII)	R1
6	Cactuar/Cactrot	R2
7	Aya (Parasite Eve)	L1 + L2
8	SD-style Chocobo	R1 + R2
9	IbenSuper airship	L1 + R1
10	Jack	L2 + R2

Codes stolen from www.cheatcc.com

Rugrats



42 SECRETS
If you insert your game CD into a PC and open up the datahints folder, there will be 42 text files filled with cheats, tips, and hints!

Codes submitted by Rodrick Alberto

Send all code submissions to:
EXECUTE
Dimension Publishing
1175 Chess Drive, Suite E
Foster City, CA 94404
or email us at: d3@quake.net

GAME SHARK™

Codez

Welcome to the Game Shark section. Each month we'll list the newest and coolest codez right here for your cheat'n pleasure. Warning: These codes won't work without a Game Shark. For the latest codez and info, get on the internet and check www.gameshark.com, www.cmgsgcc.com or www.datel.co.uk. If you find a code doesn't work, you may need to upgrade your Game Shark. Check your instruction manual for details. (Most of these codes are "unofficial" and may or may not work correctly at all. Use at your own risk.)

LUNAR COMPLETE (GameShark v3.0)

Instant Level Up To 99.....	800282CE	2400
Infinite Health In Battle...	80030660	0055
Infinite Magic In Battle....	8002E7E6	2400
Walk Thru Walls.....	80066716	2400
Infinite Money	801DC37C	FFFF
Max Money	801DC37C	967F
	801DC37E	0098
All Movies In Rememberizer	801DC3AC	FFFF
	801DC3AE	FFFF
All Towns w/Dragon Wings....	801DC3DC	FFFF
	801DC3DE	FFFF

BLOODY ROAR 2 (GameShark v3.0)

Infinite Health P1 Only.....	80178A5C	0100
	80178A5E	3221
	80178A64	000D
	80178A66	1020
Infinite Health P2 Only.....	80178A5C	0100
	80178A5E	3221
	80178A64	000D
	80178A66	1420
Infinite Health P1 & P2.....	80178A9A	2400
Infinite Time 2 Choose Char.	801FFE1C	1760
Have All Characters.....	801C0FF4	FFFF
Have All Movies.....	801C0FD0	FFFF
Get All Pictures.....	801C0FFC	FFFF
	801C0FFE	FFFF
	801C1000	FFFF
	801C1002	FFFF
	801C1004	FFFF
Have All Custom.....	801C0FEC	FFFF
	801C0FEE	FFFF
Infinite Time	80151356	2400

CENTIPEDE (GameShark v3.0)

Adventure Mode

Infinite Lives	800B99F8	0004
Max Score	D0114FE8	0000
	80114FE8	FFFF

Arcade Mode

P1 Infinite Lives.....	80095DCC	0003
P2 Infinite Lives.....	80095DD0	0002

SHADOW MADNESS (GameShark v3.0)

Infinite HP Stinger.....	8010B586	03E7
	8010B588	03E7
Infinite MP Stinger.....	8010B58A	03E7
	8010B58C	03E7
Infinite HP Windleaf.....	8010B4CC	03E7
	8010B4CE	03E7
Infinite MP Windleaf.....	8010B4D0	003E7
	8010B4D2	03E7
Infinite HP Xero.....	8010B548	03E7
	8010B54A	03E7
Infinite MP Xero.....	8010B54C	03E7
	8010B54E	03E7
Infinite HP Jirina.....	8010B50A	03E7
	8010B50C	03E7
Infinite MP Jirina.....	8010B50E	03E7
	8010B510	03E7
Infinite HP Clementt.....	8010B602	03E7
	8010B604	03E7
Infinite MP Clementt.....	8010B606	03E7
	8010B608	03E7
Infinite HP Harv-5.....	8010B5C4	03E7
	8010B5C6	03E7
	8010B5C8	03E7
	8010B5CA	03E7

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CROC'S BACK WITH A BUNCH



Croc races into action in a go-kart, hang glider, speedboat, mine cart and a hot air balloon!



Croc hurries along pathways, and scurries below them.



Croc picks up and throws objects to discover hidden clues!

OF NEW ZANY CHARACTERS!



EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Croc's back in an exciting new adventure as he searches for his long lost parents. But the search soon becomes a showdown as Croc's archenemy, Baron Dante, is magically resurrected by his evil Dantinis. Join Croc's journey as he explores over 40 levels within four Gobbo tribe villages, each packed with unique Gobbos, mischievous monsters, and tons of fun!



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TARZAN



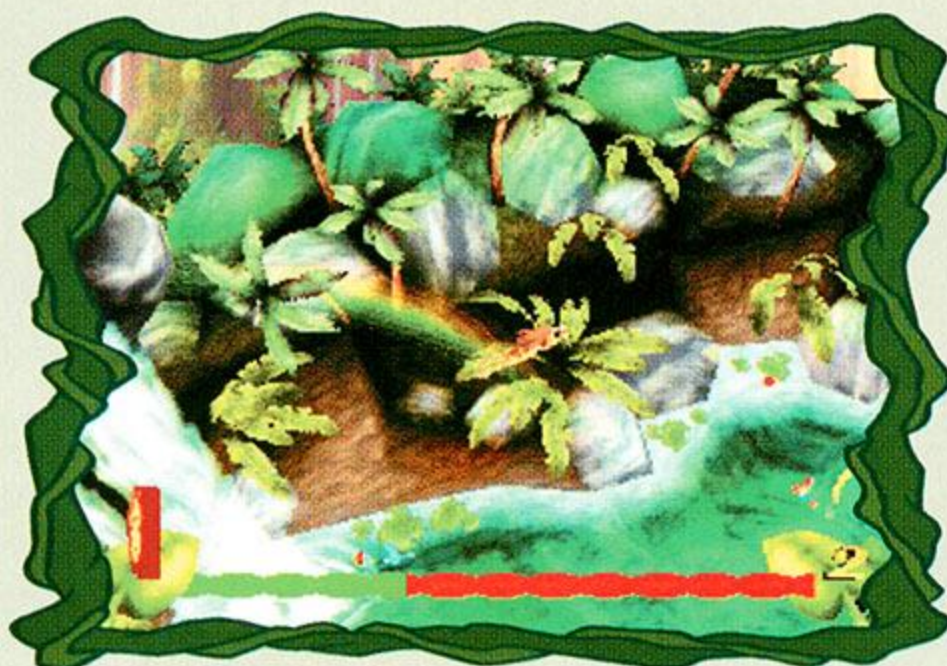
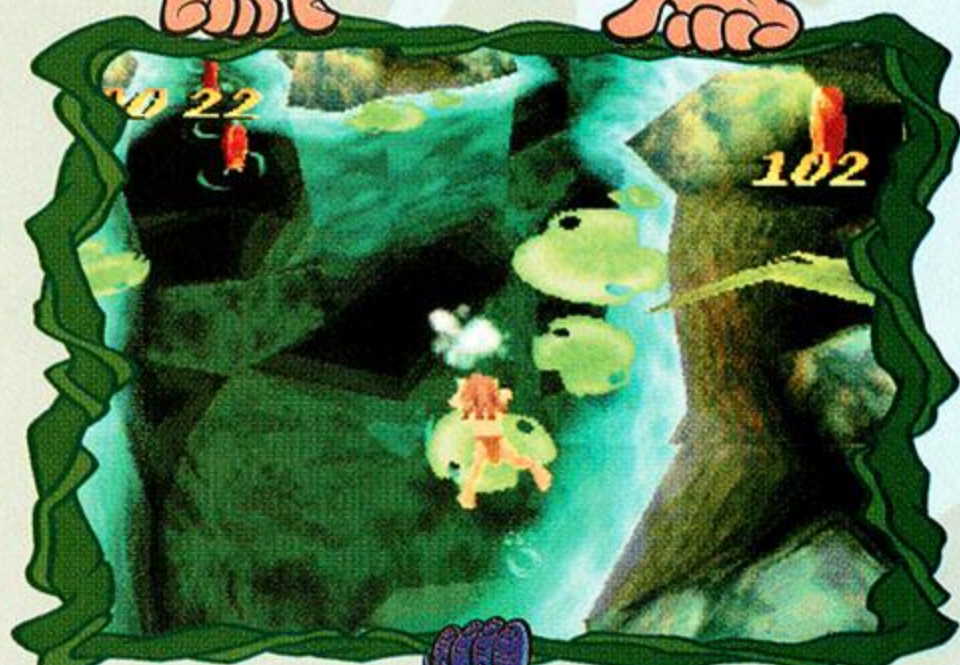
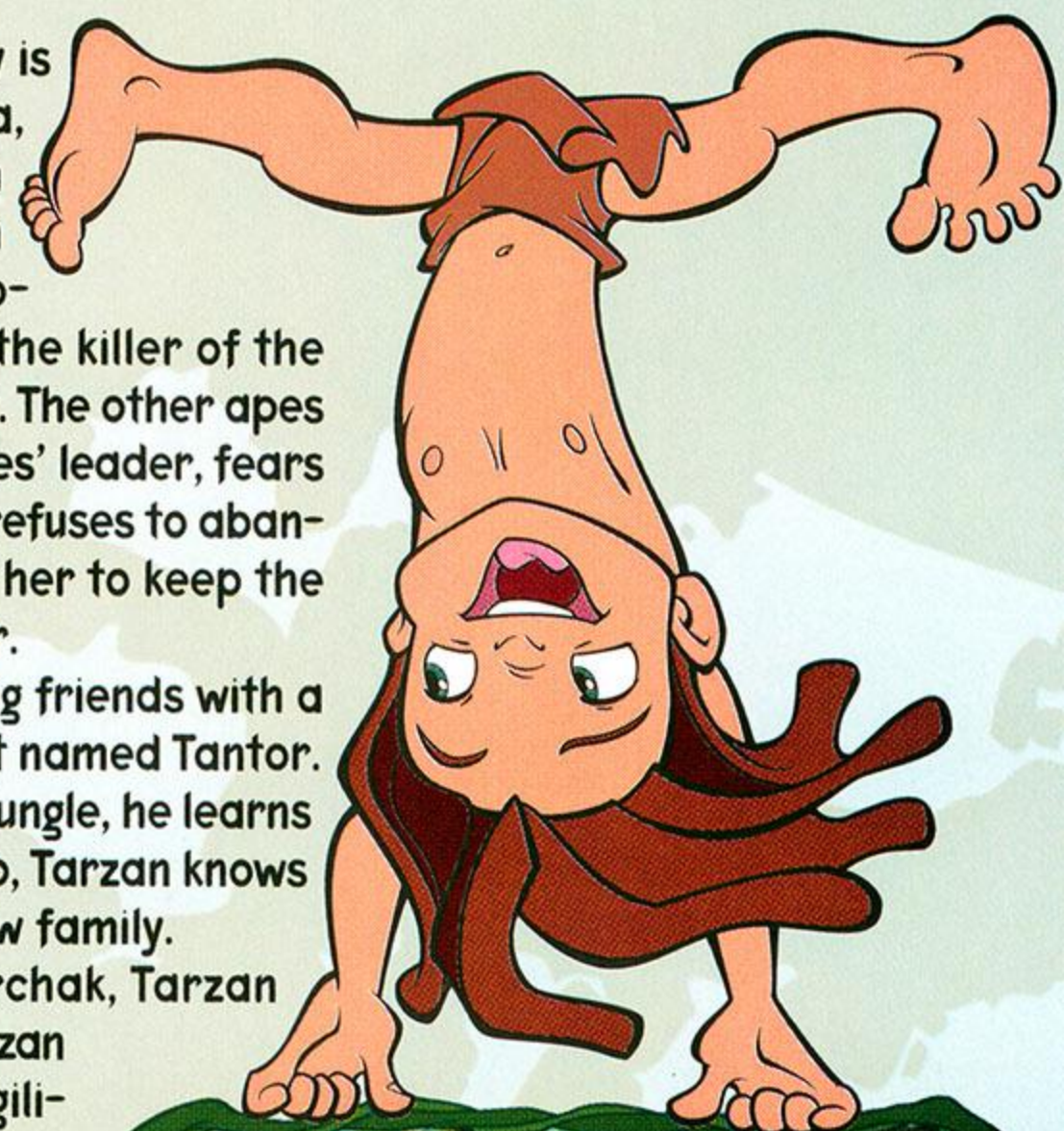
For those of you that have yet to see the movie, the story is as follows; Orphaned in the jungle, Tarzan is rescued by Kayla, a female gorilla, who discovers the baby in a tree house high above the jungle floor. An immediate bond forms between the two when Kala is forced to save Tarzan from the leopard, Sabor, a longtime enemy of the gorilla family and the killer of the child's parents. Kala returns with Tarzan to her ape family. The other apes look at the baby with uncertainty, and Kerchak, the apes' leader, fears the baby will bring danger to his family. When Kala refuses to abandon the child to a certain death, Kerchak allows her to keep the baby, but refuses to be a father to this stranger.

Tarzan thrives in the jungle, quickly becoming friends with a tomboy ape named Terk and a neurotic elephant named Tantor. As Tarzan watches all of the creatures of the jungle, he learns their skills and uses what he learns. Even so, Tarzan knows he is different from the animals in his new family.

Determined to prove himself to Kerchak, Tarzan vows to become, "the best ape ever!" As Tarzan grows into adulthood, his strength and agility allow him to move through the jungle with ease. When Sabor attacks Kerchak, Tarzan kills the leopard, finally earning Kerchak's respect and acceptance. Just when it seems that he has finally fit into the gorilla family, gunshots announce the arrival of humans. With that one sound, Tarzan's world changes forever.

Curious about these new strangers, Tarzan must find out more about them. He is quickly introduced to Professor Porter, a noted scientific expert on gorillas, Professor Porter's daughter, Jane, and Clayton, their opportunistic jungle guide. Unimagined adventures await Tarzan as his human acquaintances encounter the gorilla world he grew up in.

Disney's Tarzan is making its way to the small (interactive) screen courtesy of developer Eurocom (they also did Hercules), Disney Interactive and, on the PlayStation, Sony. The game





traces the movie's basic storyline and allows players to follow Tarzan from his youth into manhood. The game plays much like Hercules, with a combination of side-scrolling and 3D action. Also like Eurocom's Hercules adventure, Tarzan must collect power-ups, letters that spell out T-A-R-Z-A-N, etc. In addition, levels feature sketch pieces that, when all are collected, will allow the player access to a bonus level. In total, there are 18 levels in the game that represent the significant scenes from the movie.

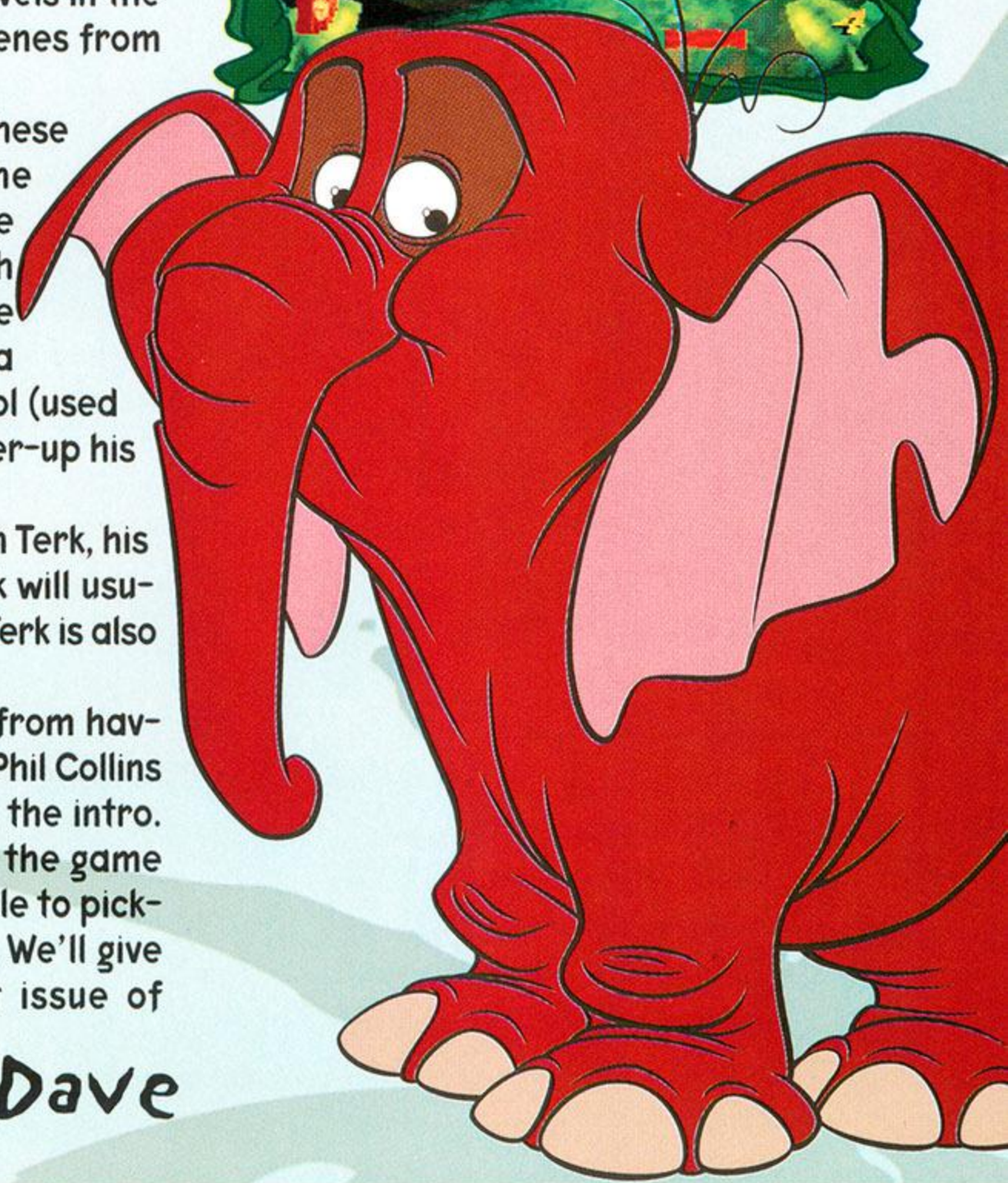
In order to make it through all of these levels, Tarzan has a number of moves and weapons at his disposal. The King of the Jungle can swing on vines, climb cliffs, trees and vines, tree surf (you know... the move he's putting on in all of the movie trailers), Ground Pound (this move will release health and weapon collectibles and can allow access to hidden areas) and make use of the Power Jump move, allowing Tarzan to jump over high obstacles. In addition, there are a number of weapons that he can make use of, including a knife, a spear, Jane's parasol (used while tree surfing) and four different types of Power Fruit — these allow Tarzan to power-up his fruit projectile to defeat tougher enemies.



Tarzan also has the ability to call on Terk, his life-long simian friend, at any time. Terk will usually have some useful advice for Tarzan. Terk is also a playable character in the game.

Of course, the game also benefits from having a lot of movie footage and the great Phil Collins soundtrack. All you have to do is watch the intro. sequence to be convinced that Tarzan the game is a quality experience. You should be able to pick-up the game by the time you read this. We'll give Tarzan a full going-over in the next issue of PSExtreme.

Dave



AR231
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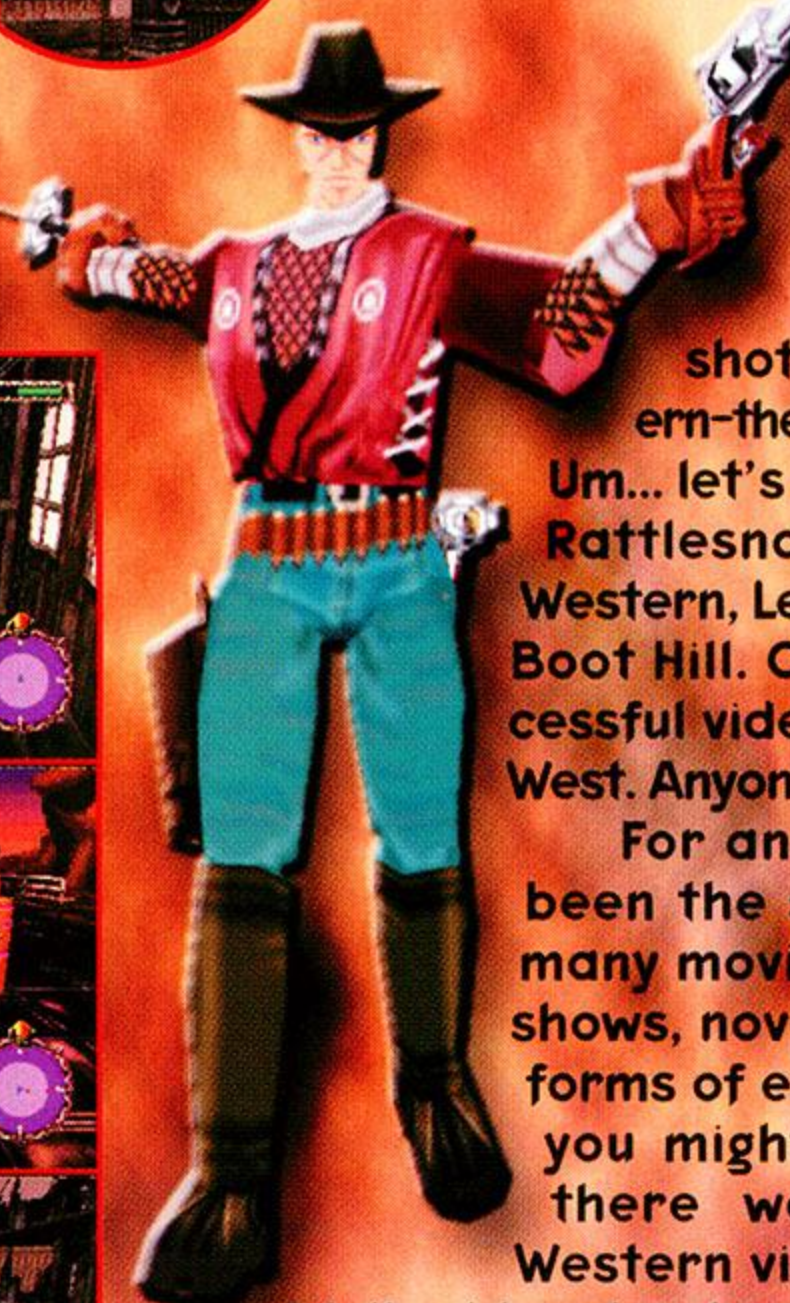
wipeout[™] 3

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published by: AGETEC
developed by: UEP Systems
percent complete: 90%
release: August 99

RISING ZAN THE SAMURAI GUNMAN



Pop quiz, hot-shot! Name a western-themed videogame. Um... let's see: Silverload, Rattlesnake Red, Wild Western, Lethal Enforcers II, Boot Hill. Okay... name a successful videogame set in the Old West. Anyone? Anyone? Bueller?

For an era which has been the setting for so many movies, television shows, novels and other forms of entertainment, you might expect that there would be many Western videogames. Not so.

Well, at least not yet. Don't look now, but on the horizon is that hero with the heart of a gunman and the soul of a Samurai—Rising Zan!

No, I'm not joking. Rising Zan, a game which has been out in Japan since April, is on its way to the U.S. courtesy of Agetec and UEP Systems. It stars a gun-fighter formerly known as Johnny who becomes trained in the Far East and returns to his home town to kick some butt with a gun in one hand and a Katana in the other. Hey — at least he didn't change his name to an unpronounceable symbol!

From the opening music video, which looks like it would make a fantastic Saturday morning cartoon series, it is evident that this is one of the quirkiest games you'll ever play. But that is fine by me. Quirky is different, and different is good. When you play and write about videogames every month, you'll gladly try anything other than

another sequel to a popular sports, racing, or fighting game.

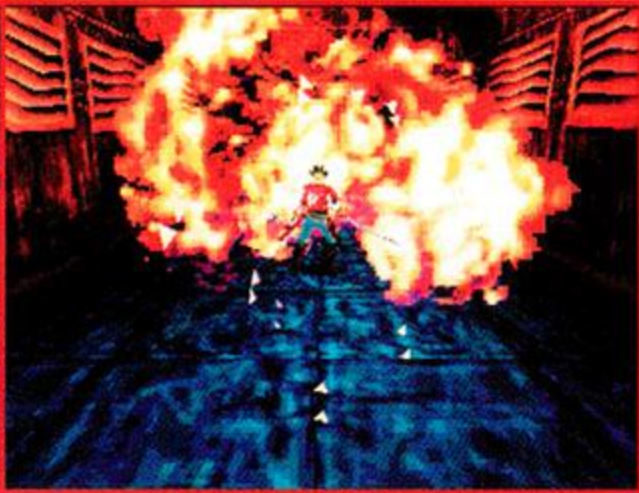
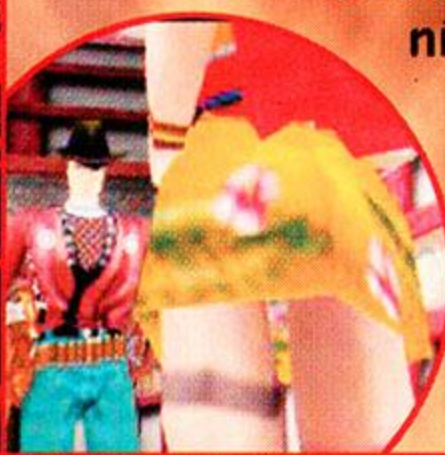
The game can best be described as an action/exploration contest viewed from a third-person perspective. In that respect, it reminds me a little of Duke Nukem: Time To Kill. Zan can jump, fend off attacks, lock on targets and fire a gun, and slash with his sword. There are lots of special button combination-style moves and finishing moves as well.

So what else does the game have to offer, other than the odd mix of Western and Japanese culture? For starters, a lot of bizarre enemies and characters populating the towns. In addition to ninjas, you'll encounter straw men, flame throwers, barely literate, club-wielding goons, scantily clad females, and a half-naked guy tied to a totem pole.

Whatever. It is obvious that the game doesn't take itself seriously. Not only is the subject matter quite odd, but the designers have injected a lot of slapstick-type humor. At one point, for example, Zan finds himself hurled high into the air. The camera cuts to show the interior of a building and its occupants. You hear Zan's scream getting louder and then, suddenly, he crashes through the roof and lands with a thud.

The graphics are okay, but nothing spectacular, and there are some collision detection and clipping problems. The camera isn't always helpful and there is a bit of slowdown between entering moves and performing them. Whether or not the gameplay will be tweaked prior to the U.S. release is unknown. Some changes are being made to the original Japanese game before we will see it here, but this may only involve the inclusion of new modes of play. Hopefully, the designers will provide a little more polish, while still retain-





ing the quirky sense of humor.

There really is no easy way to describe this game except to say that it is an amalgam of Blazing Saddles, Kung Fu, The Wild Wild West (the television show, not the film), Shogun, Mortal Kombat, and Buckaroo Banzai. Quirky, offbeat, unusual, bizarre, odd, strange, peculiar... I could go on and on but I think I'm running out of synonyms.

Will it be as fun as it is different? Will it find a niche in the market? We shall see when the game hits the shelves this fall.

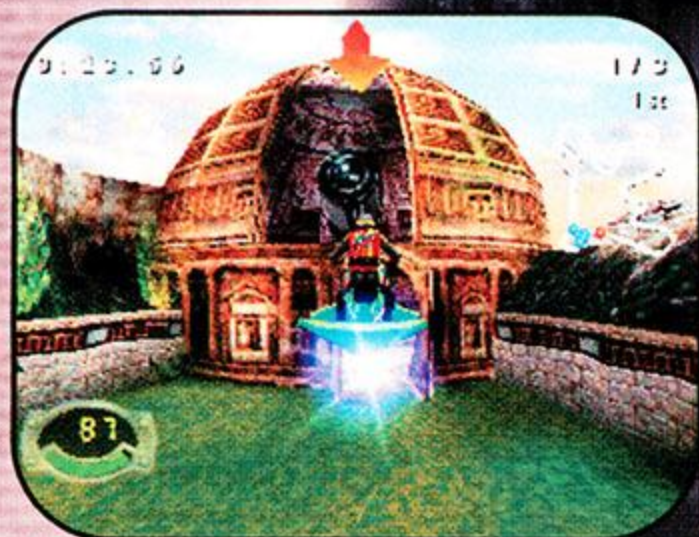
MARK

SUPER - ULTRA - SEXY - HERO - ZAN



SUPER-ULTRA-SEXY-HERO-ZAN

JetMoto 3



Never underestimate the allure of strapping a huge, throbbing engine between your legs, gripping on to a set of skinny handlebars and cranking the throttle all the way back. The fact that you can hit speeds close to 200 MPH, while hovering over the surface of water, streets, forests, beaches and snowy mountain tops has always been a huge draw with gamers.

Brakes? Brakes are something that other people seem to need. Real Jet Moto enthusiasts know that the only things that matter are speed, reflexes and judicious application of the magnetic grapple.

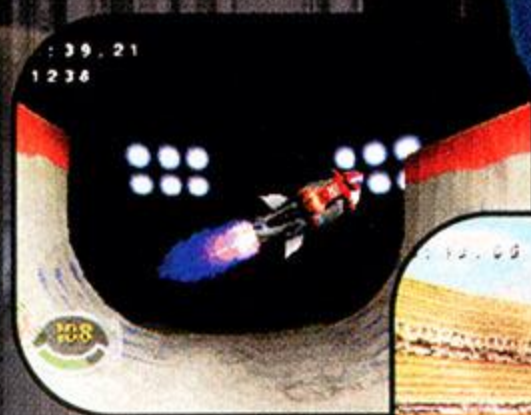
While a cool philosophy, the combo of breakneck speed and the untrustworthy grapple has left more than a few of us splattered across the countryside as the end result of high speed track miscalculations. After hear-

ing the piteous, begging cries of JM fans, 989 has finally relented and included airbrakes for much sharper turns and better bike control (rumor has it that airbrakes were actually supposed to be implemented in Jet Moto 2).

Since you now have a set of airbrakes to help you steer your rocket-sled, the magnetic grapple has become a tool of another type. While there will still be crazy 180 degree turns that you'll be forced to barber-pole around, the grapple is going to become an essential tool for keeping you in the race. You'll now have to use the grapple to swing across chasms that would otherwise be impassable, or to pull yourself up sheer cliff faces to reach the next section of track. Miss that single grapple point and you'll be picking road grit and windshield out of your face.

The main com-





ponent of the Jet Moto series has always been the feeling of raw speed you get when flying down the track. In Jet Moto 2, you lost a bit of the speed because the courses were filled with so many riders, but JM3 developers Pacific Coast Power & Light (the same people working on Road Rash for the N64) have bumped up the frame rate and, more importantly, managed to keep it at a steady 30 frames per second at all times. This was accomplished by trimming down the number of riders on the track (there were so many guys in the last game, it was ridiculous), creating more complex tracks and by creating a better and faster 3D engine than the last game.

Jet Moto 3 sports 16 new tracks, including water, dirt, ice, snow, sand and concrete terrain, all of which affect your bike's speed and handling. I must admit that I've never understood how different surfaces can change the performance of a vehicle that hovers; must be the type of physics problem that I slept through in High School. Expect the tracks to be as complicated and crazy as you've come to

expect from the series thus far. Even the super-tough "Suicide Tracks" return, which are always good for scenes of mass chaos and hurtling jet bike pilots.

There are, thankfully, only eleven jet bikes to choose from in JM3, instead of the mind-boggling twenty-some-odd bike and rider combinations from the last game that were confusing and totally unnecessary.

Racer AI has been tuned up to give you almost as much of a challenge from the opponents as you have from the environment itself. The computer characters will now fight for position with you and each other, bumping, scraping and side-swiping their way to the finish line like crazed mothers fighting for the last piece of Pokemon merchandise.

I've always been a big fan of the Jet Moto series, even though I've never been particularly good at the game. Hopefully, the new engine and gameplay should make the game accessible even to dolts like me.

CHRIS

bleem!

Final Fantasy VIII

Virtual Game Station

versus

bleem!

Bloody Roar 2

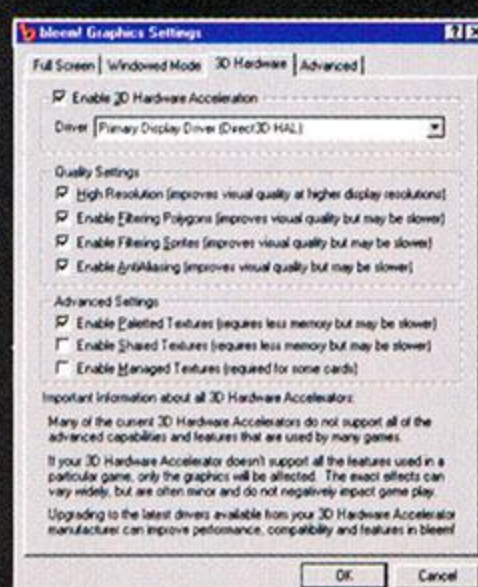
bleem! - 3D Accelerated

DieHard Trilogy

Virtual Game Station

versus

bleem!



As the first commercial PlayStation emulator for the PC, bleem! is something that PlayStation owners have been wanting to get their hands on for awhile. The only question: does it live up to the hype? After a few disappointing initial demo releases, the bleem! team seems to be starting to get their act together.

The most impressive part of bleem! is the emulator's ability to utilize a PC's 3D accelerator card. If you have one of these bad boys in your PC (and what true gamer doesn't?) bleem! can use the card to render your current PlayStation games in high resolution glory. This

means that the games will look better on your computer monitor than they ever did on your TV. Once you've seen the likes of Gran Turismo or Wipeout XL running in high resolution, going back to the PlayStation versions can be difficult.

Another impressive bit about the emulator is its speed. Running on a Gateway PII/350 (a modest PC by today's standards) and utilizing the software renderer at 800x600, Wipeout XL was running too fast to play. I had to turn on bleem!'s speed limiter feature in order to get Wipeout XL to run at a proper speed. The mere fact that the software was running games too fast is a testament to the efficiency of the code.

In terms of accessory support, bleem! is fairly good. The emulator has memory card support, and it can import Dex Drive saves. Unfortunately you cannot export saves to Dex Drive files. The controller interface is nicely done, with the ability to emulate either a standard controller or an analog controller. If you have a controller recognized by Win9x, bleem! should see the controller and give you the option to auto-configure it for the emulator. You can use the keyboard with bleem!, but a controller, such as the Microsoft Sidewinder, is recommended for best game-play.

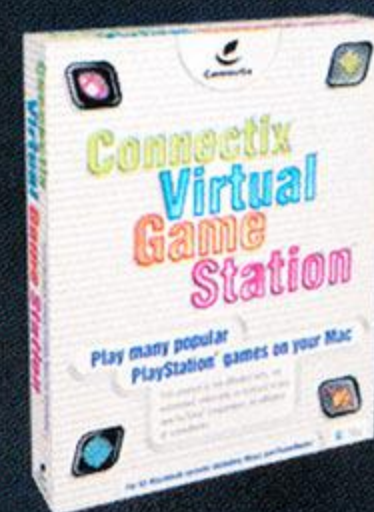
Sound is definitely a weakness for bleem! with a quality level that is way below what we were expecting. Both music and sound effects would pop and scratch, sounding as if the speaker were underwater. Playing with the options improves the issue somewhat, but perfect sound remained out of our grasp, even on test systems with Creative Labs hardware. Hopefully, this will be fixed in the next release; because, at this point, you almost want to play without enabling the sound.

Perhaps the biggest problem with bleem! is its reliance on Direct-X 6.0. The emulator itself does not speak directly to a computer's hardware. Instead it, like many other current games, talks with the Direct-X layer and Direct-X talks to the system's hardware. The problem with this setup is that it relies on the consumer to have the latest drivers for every component in their system. If a single driver is non-compliant, it can be enough to prevent bleem! from running properly. As a result, the mass market may have trouble embracing this product.

Along with the driver issues surrounding bleem!, are the configuration issues. If you can find a game that works perfectly on bleem!, it works great. Really great. But when there's a problem, bleem! can be a pain. To their credit, the bleem! guys have some good support information on their website and some problems can be worked through, but this assumes a certain level of computer knowledge. The average computer game player might not be able to get bleem! up and running. The novice would be out of luck.

Thankfully, the bleem! team seems dedicated to improving the emulator. Constant updates are planned (there were six updates over six weeks, for the demo version alone) to improve both performance and compatibility. Because updates are free, the product should stay compatible with new releases. Currently Final Fantasy VIII compatibility is listed as one of the "to do" items on bleem!'s website. With any luck, it will be running by the time the U.S. version of FFVIII is released. bleem! is never going to replace the PlayStation, but it will complement the system. It is a fun toy to play with — the coolness potential on this is terribly high especially when running bleem! on a laptop. For now, however, bleem! isn't really a viable commercial product. If you have the technical savvy to keep your drivers up-to-date and know your way around a PC, bleem! is worth checking out.

Connectix Virtual Game Station



Although Connectix is currently under a temporary restraining order preventing them from shipping any more units of Virtual Game Station, the units currently in the channel are still being sold on retail shelves and bundled with some iMacs.

As the first of the commercial PlayStation emulators (Virtual Game Station was originally on the market back in February 1999), Virtual Game Station

was partly responsible for bringing emulators out of the closet and into the mainstream. Connectix is no stranger to emulation, having released Virtual PC (a PC emulator) for the Macintosh.

The strongest features of Virtual Game Station are the ease of use and compatibility. Unlike the PC PlayStation emulator, bleem!, Virtual Game Station does not have any configuration issues. The installation of the emulator is really as simple as clicking on the installer icons. Within minutes we were up and running and playing PlayStation games without a problem.

Virtual Game Station has an excellent track record, in terms of game compatibility. Nearly every game we threw at the emulator ran and ran at full speed, with perfect audio, and perfect FMV. There were some occasional problems, but nothing major.

Sound and FMV support on the Virtual Game Station is nice, with the movies playing back nicely. In game music and sound effects are crisp and clear. This was an issue with initial version of the emulator, but the current patch (1.2) seems to resolve all prior sound problems.

Where the Virtual Game Station is lacking, is in the program's feature set. First and foremost is the lack of 3D acceleration. The primary appeal of bleem!, is the ability to run the games in an enhanced mode. Every iMac or G3 Mac has 3D hardware inside; it is a shame that Connectix hasn't been able to spend the time required tweaking all the games that need tweaking in order to support 3D acceleration at high resolutions (maybe if they didn't have a lawsuit to deal with). As a result the games look good, but no better than on the TV. In fact, sometimes they look a bit worse because the high-resolution monitor can reveal pixelization that is normally blurred away by a TV's lower resolution picture tube. However, if you have the ability to connect your Mac to your TV, it'll look just like a PlayStation.

Another feature lacking is the ability to play imports. Connectix attributes this to their anti-piracy measures. They don't want to give Sony any ammunition to sue them with. This, despite the fact that Sony, themselves, sells a unit (the Yaroze) which will play imports; and, the "official" Sony publications, such as their Underground CD magazine, promote import games.

Last, but not least, is the emulator's inability to emulate anything other than a digital controller. We would have liked to see some sort of analog support in there. This isn't much of an issue, until you realize that some games really need the analog sticks to play properly. Don't believe us? Try playing Gran Turismo in digital mode. It just doesn't compare. The lack of analog support will also render analog only games, such as Ape Escape, unplayable on the emulator.

The Virtual Game Station does have memory card support and, like bleem!, it can import Dex Drive saves but cannot export the saves back to a Dex Drive file.

If you plan on playing anything with the Virtual Game Station, a controller is more or less required. A keyboard is for typing, not for playing games. Our gamepad of choice, for the Virtual Game Station, is a Gravis USB Gamepad. It is the closest thing on the Mac to a real PlayStation pad in terms of feel and control. There's also the JoyPort from Kernal Productions, which will let you use a real PlayStation controller on your Mac (as well as N64, PC and Genesis controllers), but it's not quite "plug & play" like the Gravis USB.

As a company, Connectix has a number of resources behind their development team and Virtual Game Station has the polish of a finished product, but the feature set leaves a little to be desired. If you have a G3, Virtual Game Station is fun to play, but at a retail price of \$49.95, it is an expensive toy, especially considering it does not improve on the visual quality of the games. However, if you've got a G3 Powerbook, what could be cooler than playing PlayStation games on the go?

R-Type Delta



Virtual Game Station v1.2

Publisher/Developer: Connectix
Compatibility: 2 Players, Virtual Memory Card, iMac, G3 Mac
Availability: Mac retailers, limited to stock on hand.
Retail Price: \$49.95

- + Easy to configure - just install and play
- + Excellent compatibility and performance
- + Dex Drive support
- + Great for Mac users, adds many games to their selection
- Does not allow playing of imports
- No 3D Accelerator support
- No demo
- Higher price point



89%

bleem!

Publisher/Developer: bleem, LLC
Compatibility: 2 Players, Virtual Memory Card, 3D Accelerator, Win9x
Availability: Mail order only
Retail Price: \$29.95

- + Supports 3D Accelerators
- + Updated often
- + Allows the playing of import games
- + Excellent performance
- + Dex Drive support
- + Demo version available
- Sound support needs work
- Requires key CD before every use
- Some compatibility issues
- Can be difficult for a novice to configure



82%



SPOTLIGHT ON

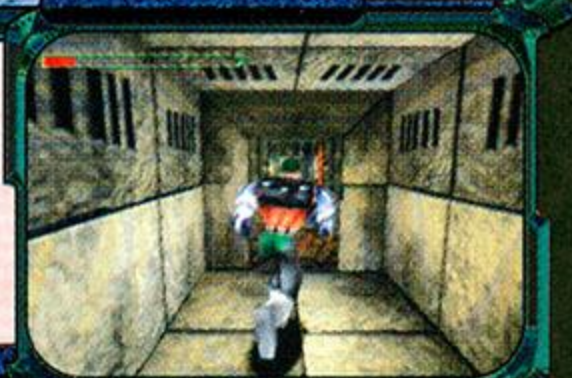
MIDWAY

Midway is re-focusing its efforts on the PlayStation this year, with a product catalogue that offers both quantity and quality. While the Texas-based publisher spent most of its time and effort on the Nintendo 64 in 1998, they are back to the PlayStation with a vengeance in 1999. You can look forward to seeing all of the products showcased over the next three pages by the end of the year.

GAUNTLET LEGENDS



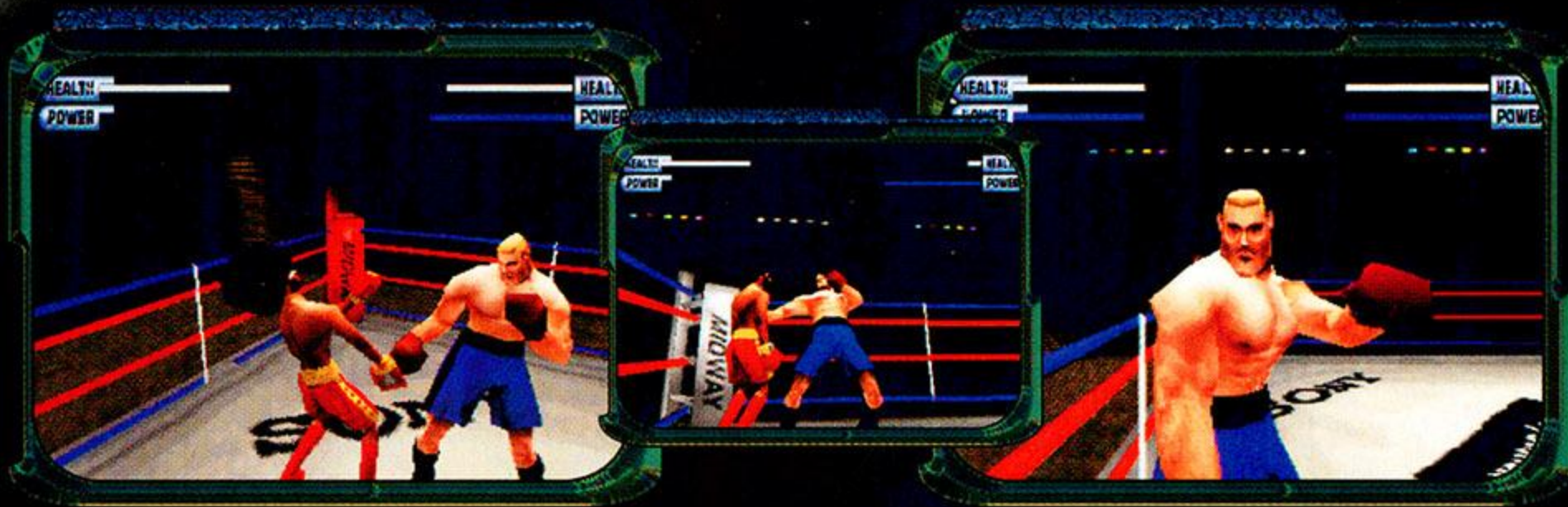
Like its predecessor, Legends allows up to four players to cooperate simultaneously on screen, in a quest to rid various worlds of their evil inhabitants. While sticking to its arcade roots, Gauntlet Legends offers a bit deeper gameplay. As you progress through the game, your characters become stronger and level up. In addition, there are a variety of secret runes to uncover and collect, and you can use the gold and treasure you find throughout each level to purchase better weapons, artifacts and magics. As a bonus for the PlayStation version, there will be two new worlds to explore and the ability to save and transport your leveled-up characters to a friend's game. Originally being developed by Blam!, Midway has taken the project in-house and will release it during late summer/early fall.



MORTAL KOMBAT SPECIAL FORCES

With a license that is almost as popular (and certainly much more controversial) as Capcom's Street Fighter series, Mortal Kombat's newest incarnation is making its way to the PlayStation this fall. This time, instead of the standard, 2D digitized sprites or 3D polygonal fighting game, we're given a third-person action/adventure title by the name of Mortal Kombat Special Forces. In the game, you take control of 3D representations of Jax and Sonya Blade, who are out to track down and put a stop to their arch-nemesis, Kano. The game will be balanced with equal parts of non-linear 3D exploration, puzzle solving, gory fighting (of course — except this time in real 3D space) and even weapon combat (there are a variety of guns and ammo to find and use in the game). In addition, there will be a variety of interactive vehicles to use. Fans of the MK series will be pleased to find a well-conceived storyline that fits into the MK universe, while casual gamers should be drawn in by the new gameplay elements.





READY 2 RUMBLE BOXING



While definitely showing its true coolness factor on Sega's Dreamcast, the PlayStation version of Ready 2 Rumble Boxing isn't too far behind. In the game, players will be able to duke it out as one of 20 unique boxers, each with their own fighting style. The detail on these contenders is truly unbelievable, as they come into the ring with over-the-top facial expressions, taunts and hyper-realistic, motion-captured animation. Featuring the voice of announcer Michael "Let's Get Ready to Rumble" Buffer and an amazing 3D engine, Ready 2 Rumble will offer a variety of gaming modes, including head-to-head, arcade and championship. The championship mode offers players the ability to take on the role of boxer and manager, by assuming control of managing money used to sign boxers, as well as buy equipment for the gym. They can then use the equipment to train and build up their boxer's power, speed, stamina, punches and durability. The arcade mode is all about whompin' and stompin'; with the more hits you connect the more powered-up your fighter becomes. Connect enough hits and spell out the word 'rumble', then it's time to unleash the big guns.

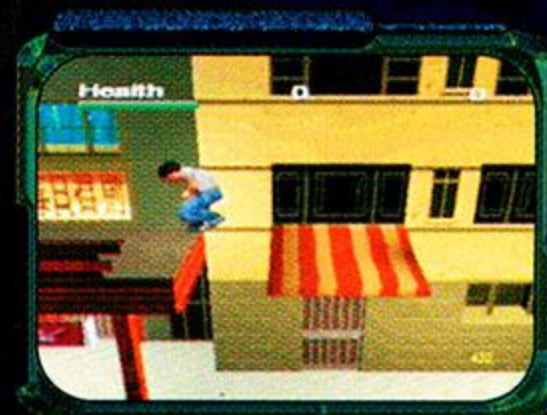


ARCADE 12 PAK

Fans of classic arcade games are in for a treat when Midway releases the fifth volume of its Arcade's Greatest Hits series, titled Arcade 12 Pack. AGH made its debut in 1996 with a compilation of six Williams coin ops – Joust, Robotron, Defender, Defender II, Sinistar, and Bubbles – which were unique because they were emulated. That is, the Digital Eclipse team created a program which allowed the PlayStation to run the original source code of the coin-op machines. Three more compilations followed – two with classic Atari games such as Asteroids, Battlezone, Centipede, Paperboy, and Gauntlet, and one more with Williams/Midway games, such as Burgertime, Spy Hunter, Tapper, and Moon Patrol. Some of the earlier collections also featured interviews with the programmers and a trivia challenge. The fifth installment promises to top all previous efforts. The tentative line-up includes: Smash TV, Wizard of Wor, Omega Race, Gorf, Satan's Hollow, Rampage, Gauntlet II, APB, Toobin', Klax, Super Sprint and 720. While the final line-up could change prior to release, the collection will definitely include a dozen classic arcade games. If the collection comes on two disks, as is expected, perhaps there will be room for additional material, such as a photo gallery.



JACKIE CHAN'S Stuntmaster



Jackie Chan's Stuntmaster fell into a bit of limbo due to a shakeup at Radical Entertainment (the game's co-developers). Thankfully, Midway wasn't about to let this game fall into obscurity, and has continued on with development cycle. Currently at about 75% complete,

JC's Stuntmaster brings the king of action heroes to life in fully rendered 3D action. As Jackie, you get to star in your own martial arts movie. It seems that your arch-rival has shot the director during the filming of your next movie. Now, it's up to you to chase him down while the cameras are still rolling. Using actual motion captured moves and animation from the kung-fu master himself, you control Jackie as he fights his way through throngs of thugs and enemies while performing an array of incredible stunts. In addition to his fists and feet, Jackie has the ability to use just about any environmental object as a weapon. Look for the game at retail this fall, and for our review in the September or October issue of PSEXtreme.

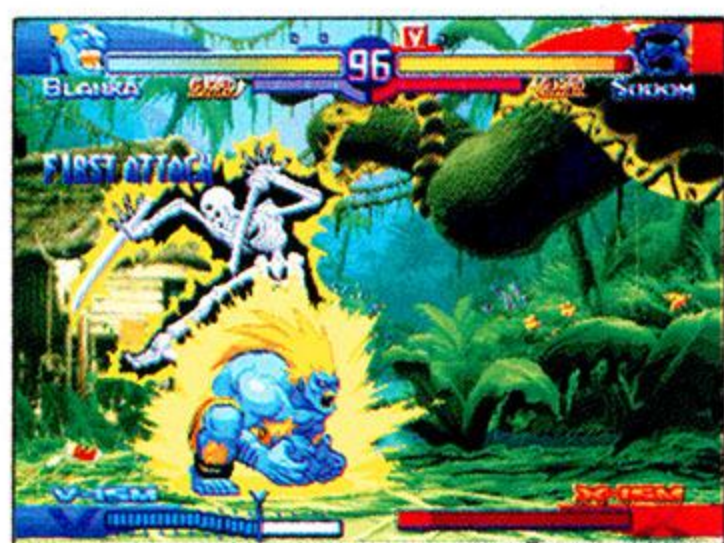
NFL

BLITZ 2000



NFL Blitz 2000 for the PlayStation is sure to get fans of the coin-op pumped up, because all of the new features found in latest arcade version will be coming home, as well as some additional, console-specific features. The first thing you'll notice is the increased number of colors found in the PSX version, making the title more vibrant and detailed. The next is the inclusion of a play editor — allowing you to save up to 12 different plays and use them in any of the gameplay modes (arcade, tournament, season). The play editor is fairly deep, making it possible to choose the formation, plan the starting positions of all seven guys on the field, and plan the route of your receivers. As you draw up the route for your receiver(s), you will be able to pick the spot where you want him to do one of the following; juke, spin, fake, block, turbo, wave, or delay his pattern. And, you can use each of these choices up to three times apiece during your route. Blitz 2000 also includes the fire feature, which was absent in last year's home version. Look for Blitz 2000 to hit store shelves this Summer.





STREET FIGHTER ALPHA 3

PERFECTION

— GAME INFORMER



Street Fighter Alpha 3 scores a triple K.O.! It's the most accurate translation of an arcade game to grace the circuits of the PlayStation game console... featuring all new enhanced modes of play, including 3 fighting styles for every character — plus the skill building, World Tour Mode. Maybe nobody's perfect. But as of today, at least one fighting game is.

CAPCOM



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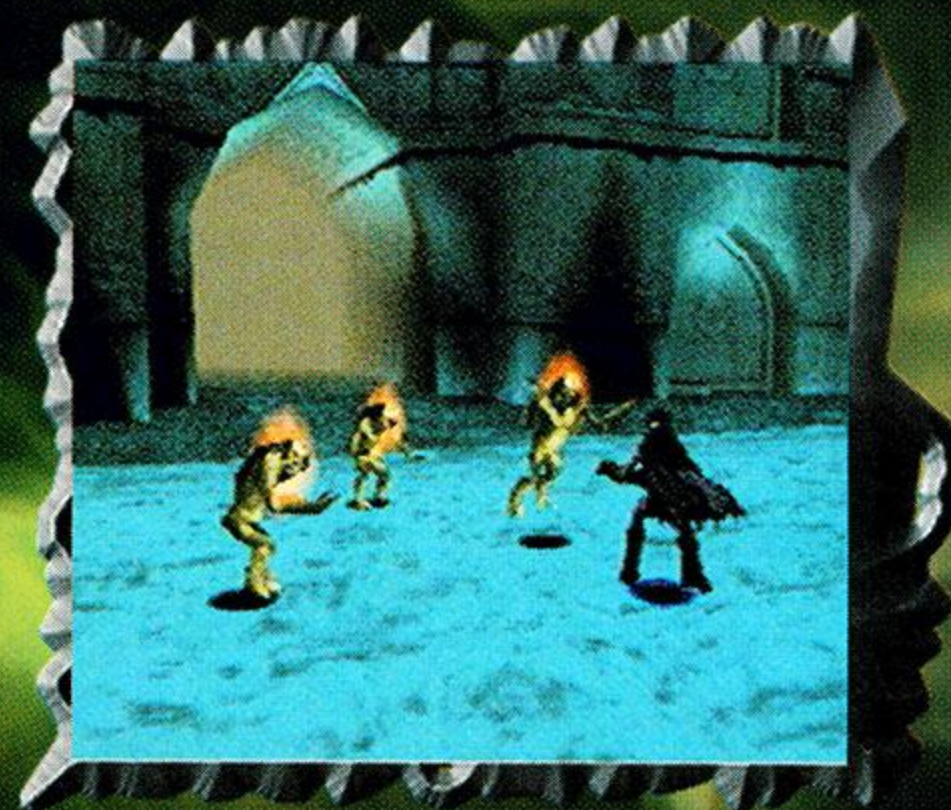
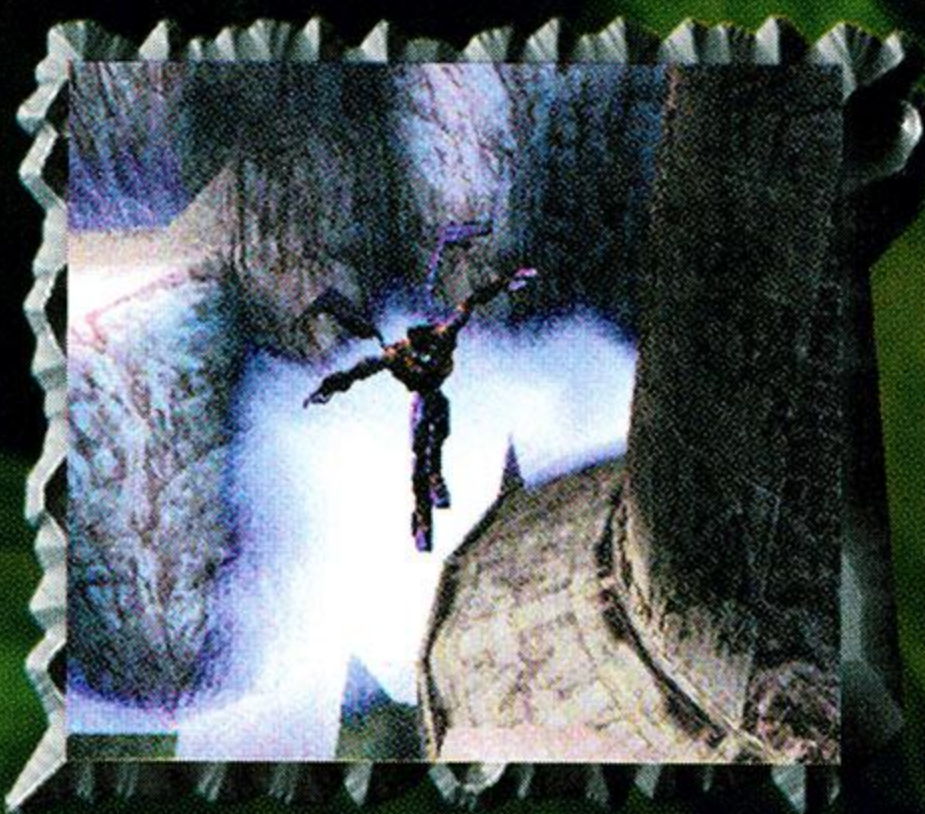
DESTROYING YOUR ENEMIES ISN'T ENOUGH...



"...very impressive indeed."

—EGM

As Raziel, stalk the shadows of Nosgoth hunting your vampire brethren. Impale them with spears. Incinerate them with torches. Drown them in water. No matter how you destroy them, you must feed on their souls to sustain your quest – the ruin of your creator, Kain.

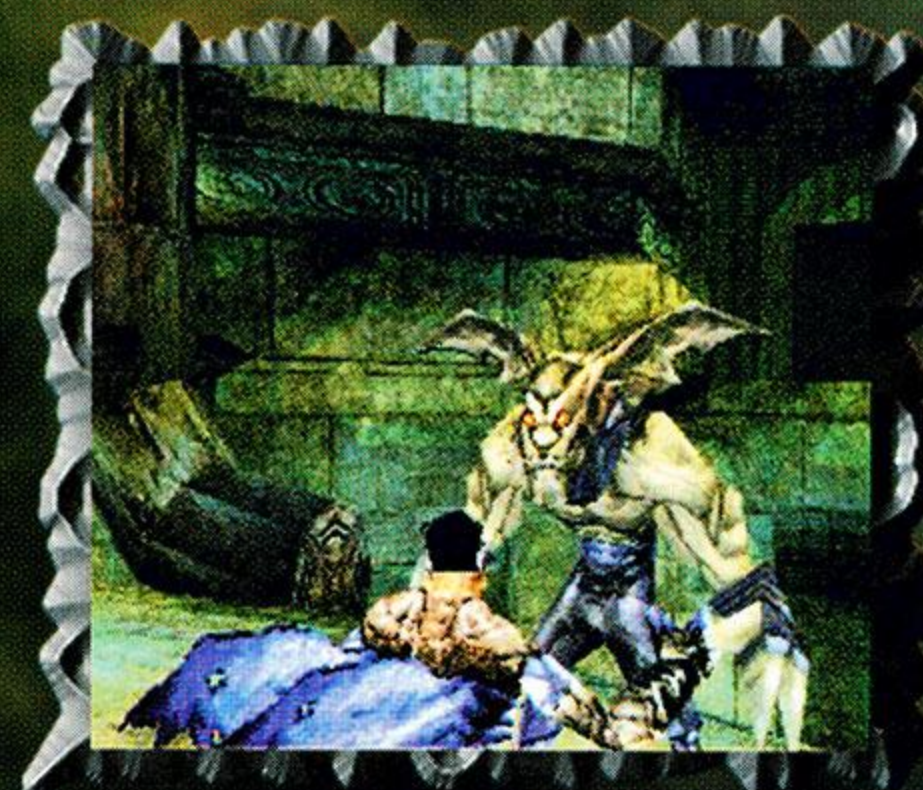


Morph onto the spectral plane and confront unique enemies and gameplay challenges

- ✦ Seamless gameplay: No load times
- ✦ Shift real-time between the material and spectral planes
- ✦ Dark gothic story

"Vampire fans get ready – Soul Reaver could be the ultimate thriller..."

—GamePro



The image is a promotional poster for the video game Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. It depicts the character Kain, a vampire with blue skin and a white star on his chest, in a dynamic pose. He is holding a long, dark sword and is in the process of decapitating a pale, undead enemy. Blood is spraying from the enemy's head. The background is a dark, misty forest with gnarled trees. The overall tone is dark and gothic.

...YOU MUST
DEVOUR THEIR SOULS

LEGACY of KAIN™
SOUL REAVER

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DYNAMICS

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FINAL FANTASY VIII®

After playing the Japanese version of Final Fantasy VIII, we all wanted to know more about the game, and the Final Fantasy series in general. So, we did what any responsible gaming magazine would do — we went to the source. Both Shinji Hashimoto and Takashi Tokita of Square Co., Ltd., were kind enough to give us an hour of their time to pick their brains. Hashimoto is currently the producer for Final Fantasy VIII, and also worked on Final Fantasy VII, Tobal 2, Front Mission 2 and Chocobo's Magic Dungeon 2. IN addition, he is working with Tokita on Chocobo Racing, where Hashimoto is the producer and Tokita is the director. Tokita's other projects have included Final Fantasy, Final Fantasy IV, Final Fantasy Legend, Chrono Trigger, Final Fantasy VII and Parasite EVE.

PSEX: Why the new characters and new story for Final Fantasy VIII? Why not continue with the story and characters from Final Fantasy VII?

SHINJI: Cloud is a very, very popular character. However, before we got to Final Fantasy VIII, in fact from Final Fantasy I through VIII, every time we have presented a new story and new characters. It was never a continuation of one story to the next version. The very concept of producing Final Fantasy is to provide the best fantasy possible, that suits that particular era, without being limited to carrying on the previous story or setting. So, in spite of the very high popularity of Cloud, we have presented a new character in Final Fantasy VIII.

PSEX: How important are the quality of visuals and cinema scenes to the game? How do you think gamers are going to react if they play Final Fantasy VIII and then go to play the Final Fantasy Collection with its 16-bit look?

SHINJI: I think we incorporate new technology in order to heighten what we can do in terms of special effects in the fantasy we are trying to provide. If I may touch on the anthology first, we did preserve the old flavor of the era represented by Final Fantasy V and Final Fantasy VI. Rather

than to completely redo them with new technology, we wanted to preserve the flavor, because there are still fans in Japan and the world over for that look. We did incorporate new technology, in terms of the film aspect, during the opening and the ending scene in order to heighten the artwork, but we did not touch the substance of the game itself. As you can see, when it comes to Final Fantasy VII and VIII, we have incorporated technology which would reduce the difference between the movie part and the game part, or the interactive part. This is something that you would be able to tell, the more into the game you play. You really see there is a difference between those two parts. We have incorporated new technology in the anthology, in that regard, and we have incorporated new images in the movies as well.

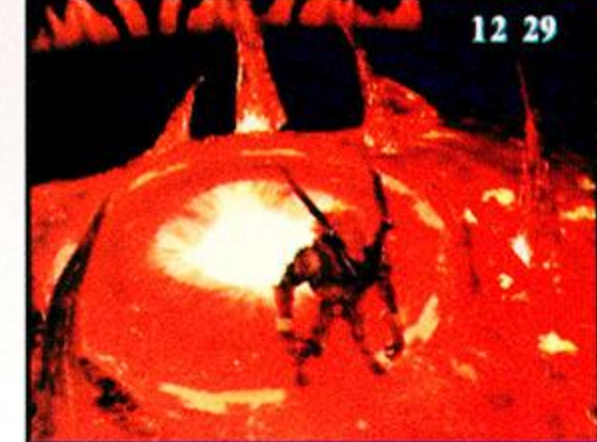
PSEX: How difficult is it creating a game like Final Fantasy VIII for a worldwide audience versus just a Japanese or American audience?

How do you ensure how things like humor and cultural differences come across and don't confuse the intended audience?

SHINJI: Although, there are many different genres of games, as far as our company is concerned, the area that we spend a lot of time on and what we produce with greatest effort is the storyline or the storytelling part of the game. That's the key to our games. That's where the unique flavor comes from. We feel what we have to be most focused on is how we can communicate the Japanese storyline, or the language part, into countries that use English as a mother tongue, as well as the European countries, in terms of language and culture.

PSEX: Do you consider a project like Final Fantasy VIII to be more of an interactive film, or more of a traditional role playing game?

SHINJI: With the Final Fantasy series, we are constantly trying to incorporate new technology with the storytelling, and that's where the new



term "cinematic RPG" came from. In fact, that reflects the area we are focusing on. We try to combine and harmonize the original role playing aspect of the game with the newest computer graphic imaging technology. Although, by incorporating it with new technology, we have not changed the very principle of the game. With the addition of computer graphic cinematic imagery, I think it has spontaneously become a new digital entertainment form. It is not something that we are trying to impose onto the audience. Mr. Tokita was involved in the production of Final Fantasy VII, so maybe he can say a few words on the subject.

TAKASHI: I think the means are the same (as with a film), yet there are differences, depending on the psychological state of the players who are actually involved in the game. Therefore, I think it's a key area. I always contemplate which particular situation the film part should be incorporated in, within the entire flow of the game.

PSEX: In terms of the sheer power of the PlayStation 2 hardware, and the possibilities for networking, the PS2 could connect multiple systems for massive multiplayer games. Is this something that Square has considered for the next Final Fantasy, a massive multiplayer world, or will the series stay as a single player game with better graphics and sound in each incarnation?

SHINJI: Currently, we have received an enormous amount of information regarding PlayStation 2 and we are in the process of studying it. We are also researching the world of networking, but when it comes to whether Final Fantasy really needs to go with a multiplayer system, we have not yet arrived at our answer. Whether we would ultimately go with Final Fantasy into network gaming, is a separate issue at this time. We are certainly studying network gaming. There is much information that we have been given regarding PlayStation 2, but we don't have yet a clear picture as to what the ultimate product of the PlayStation 2 will be. We are in that process of understanding the hardware the best we can. I think we have to spend a little more time studying the performance of the hardware and what it can offer. We would have to decide what form is best suited to do that in our next generation of Final Fantasy.

PSEX: What do you draw from for the Final Fantasy stories? What inspires you? Do you draw from classic mythology or do you attempt to generate everything internally? How do you conceive the world of a Final Fantasy, before starting on a new game?

SHINJI: The creator of Final Fantasy is located in Honolulu, working on the upcoming film. Although he incorporates many state of the art technologies and graphics, the origin of the story is human life, or life itself — the mystery of life and the focus on human drama that derives from the mystery. When we talk about human life, or life in general, in a broad sense it would also encompass the life of the universe or the stars — life in many aspects. By focusing on that theme, you will have the drama and that leads to many great adventures. That is the starting point and is what we emphasize and do not take light of. Certainly

we have many influences from Hollywood movies such as Star Wars — the graphics and the imagery — as well as taking from Japanese Animation. We have a very strong animation culture as well as many different novels in Japan. Many people read comics — there's a lot of comics that are published in Japan. All of these are factors that would influence us and I'm sure the individual creators of the graphics are all influenced, in one way or another, but the core of the Final Fantasy story would be the life.

PSEX: Can you tell us anything about the movie? Will we see any familiar characters from the games in the feature film?

SHINJI: The games and the movie are totally separate. Other than the core of the story, which is life, other than that nothing is the same. Game characters do not appear in the movie itself.

PSEX: What about the appearance of Final Fantasy characters in

other games, such as Ehrgeiz and Chocobo Dungeon? Are more spinoffs planned? Also, what about all the Final Fantasy merchandise that has appeared; is Square looking to make more than just games?

SHINJI: So far, in the Final Fantasy series, Square has been selling the story through our games. We were selling games. Chocobo are characters that can be used in all of these stories and in fact they have appeared in other stories. Starting with Final Fantasy VII with the PlayStation, it became a 3D version, which enabled characters in the game to start walking on their own. Since last year one of the business developments of Square was to set up a licensing department. I am responsible for this department. We have had many requests from different manufacturers to use the characters of the game in many different ways. Although we were selling the games, people wanted them to be incorporated into their toys or stationary or apparel. There were various different needs that arose from the marketplace, as well as from the manufacturers. We felt we needed to respond to some of the voices of the marketplace, since we are incorporating these characters in our games and selling these games. It appears the users are starting to have stronger attachments to the characters, not just as a game character, but something beyond that. Although that kind of strong affinity or attachment on the part of the users existed before, it became more predominant with the 3D PlayStation games. We try to set up a strategy to respond to the user's voices. We started to create our own little products, incorporating these characters. Cloud and Aeris are characters from Final Fantasy VII, however they are still very popular and therefore we started to construe that maybe they could appear in other games as guests, as part of the Square family of game software. In fact, they have been showing up in other games as guests. I think there is a lot of room for the creators to play with that, as well as an expression of gratitude to our fans.

TAKASHI: Cloud and Aeris appeared in other games as an expression of our gratitude for our fans. In other words it was more of a service to our fans, in appreciation. But Chocobo, from Final Fantasy VIII, became a very real character. In order to make Chocobo more appealing and a character that is approachable by young children, as well as women, we felt we should have a series in which Chocobo does not take such a real life form, but deformed. That's where the Chocobo Dungeon started. In other words in the Chocobo Dungeon game Chocobo is a character set in a way that it is approachable by not only hard-core fans, but also females and children as well. In the Chocobo Dungeon, it seems like Chocobo has started to take on a life of its own.

PSEX: Can you tell us a little about Chocobo racing? What makes Chocobo racing different than the Chocobo racing section of Final Fantasy VII? Where did the idea come from?

TAKASHI: Well the mini-game within Final Fantasy VII, including Chocobo was more of a derby type game and it had the aspect of gambling which is more appealing to adults. We decided to go with the Chocobo Dungeon which focuses on Chocobo as a main character, but because it was a dungeon game there were some aspects of confrontation and complicated factors in it. It was mainly for enthusiast game players. We decided that, perhaps, we should go into the area of racing games using Chocobo, which would enable participation or play by many different levels of consumers. That's where the idea for Chocobo Racing came from.

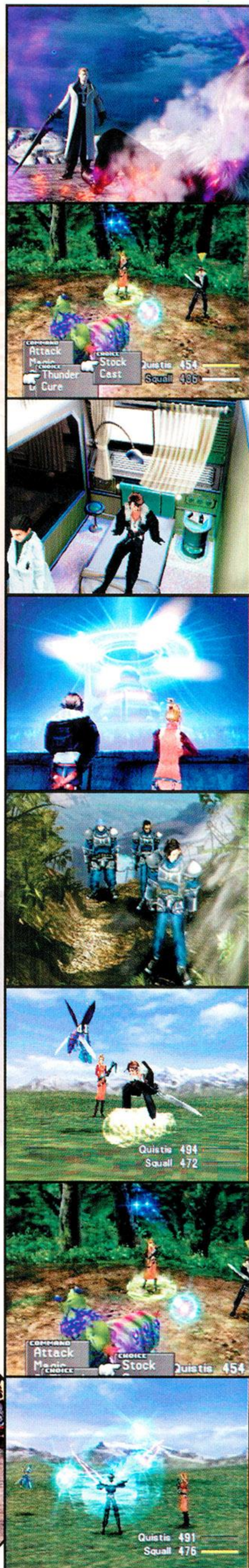
PSEX: What exactly is Chocobo?

TAKASHI: Well basically it is a bird. Initially we had the image of an ostrich, but we made it cuter and created a new species, or new type of bird.

PSEX: After spending all this time developing games, what kind of games do you guys play? What games are in your PlayStation collections at home?

SHINJI: I like to play racing games, and recently I am into horror type games such as Bio-Hazard (Resident Evil) type games.

TAKASHI: I play a lot of simulation games, because with simulation games you can actually nurture many multiple characters in units. Occasionally I would play professional wrestling games, action games, and for that I play against my friends.



LEGACY of KAIN

SOUL REAVER

Although the game has faced numerous delays, it appears that Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver should be on store shelves "real soon now." Taking a break from her hectic production schedule, Director Amy Hennig was kind enough to grant us an exclusive "behind-the-scenes" look at this gothic tale.

PSEX: Soul Reaver is radically different, gameplay wise, than Legacy of Kain. Why the change?

AMY: Because of its 2D sprite engine and top-down perspective, Legacy of Kain tends to get categorized as an RPG, while Soul Reaver — with its 3rd-person 3D engine — gets categorized as an action/adventure title. But if you look beyond the graphics and engine constraints, Legacy of Kain and Soul Reaver aren't really radically different, from a gameplay perspective. Both games involve a dark hero, require exploration and problem-solving as well as combat and enemy interaction, and provide a rich storyline that unfolds over the course of the game. In fact, the evolution from 2D to 3D has liberated the gameplay. This new game engine allows us to provide the kind of immersive experience we wanted to create in Legacy of Kain. I think that fans of the first game will see the evolution between Legacy of Kain and Soul Reaver as paralleling the advancements from SNES Zelda to Zelda 64.

PSEX: Any worries that the 3D platform genre is filling up?

AMY: If you literally mean "3D platform", Soul Reaver really isn't in that category — although Raziel can jump and glide, and these mechanics require some precision, it's not in the same category as games like Mario, Banjo-Kazooie or Gex. In terms of the 3D action/adventure genre, sure, there are a lot of games out there — which just means that developers have to raise the quality bar to stand out in the crowd. That was our philosophy, when we embarked on this project.

PSEX: What makes Soul Reaver more than just a "gothic Tomb Raider?"

AMY: Beyond being 3rd-person, real-time 3D

adventure games, Soul

Reaver and Tomb Raider don't have much in common. Soul Reaver provides a Zelda-style non-linear quest, with the game world expanding as the story unfolds and Raziel evolves as a character — whereas Tomb Raider is a relatively linear game, with character development limited to acquiring weapons and ammo. In other words, Tomb Raider is really a straight action title, while Soul Reaver falls more accurately into the action/RPG category.

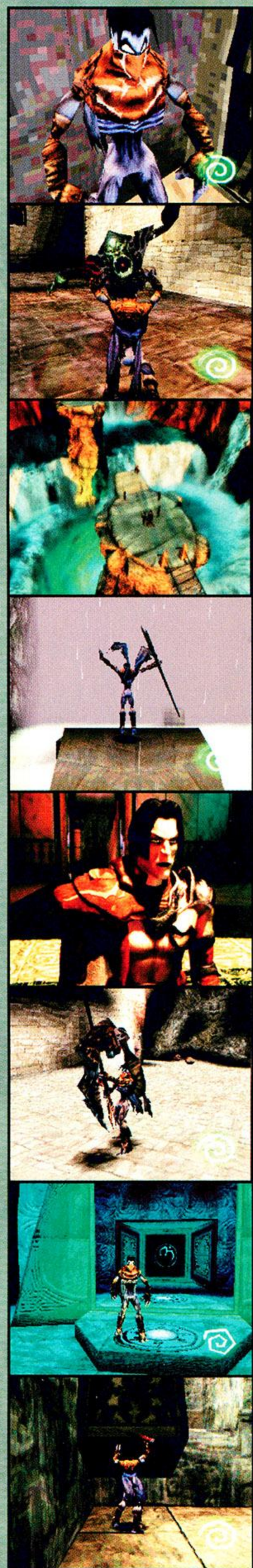
PSEX: In the original game Kain was the hero, now he is the enemy. What happened to twist the hero into an evil despot?

AMY: Well, if you recall how the first game ended, Kain was confronted with two options. He could sacrifice himself to the Pillar of Balance, consigning himself to oblivion, and in that altruistic act, heal Nosgoth's decay. Or, he could refuse the sacrifice and, in so doing, establish himself as a "dark god", ruling Nosgoth's decline. If the player opts for the second choice (as Soul Reaver assumes he did), the final cinematic portrays Kain as an arrogant overlord, seated on a throne made of

bones, surrounded by a fiery, blood-red sky. So he was pretty twisted by the end of the first game! Even so, we preferred to interpret that final cinematic figuratively, rather than literally (i.e., the Pillars aren't literally surrounded by a lake of lava in Soul Reaver). In deciding to embrace his vampire nature, Kain sets a series of world events in motion, which culminate in Soul Reaver's storyline. In classic mythological/literary terms, Raziel is the protagonist, and Kain his adversary — but Kain is still very much a complex, sympathetic character. We haven't painted him as some blackly evil, two-dimensional villain.

PSEX: With the change in gameplay and the story twist making Kain the enemy, what makes you think Soul Reaver will appeal to fans of the original?

AMY: When we set about to make a sequel, we analyzed what it was about the first game that attracted so many gamers. And in the end, we determined that it wasn't about specific things like camera perspective or 2D vs. 3D graphics, but instead about the "spirit" of the game, all the intangible things that defined Legacy of Kain. I think players were attracted to the idea of being a more complex and ambiguous hero than we usually see in RPGs, to



the duality of the character, the darkness and realism of the game environments. All of these elements are retained in Soul Reaver. Crystal Dynamics is very invested in, and attached to, Kain as a character — Kain fans shouldn't despair that Kain has been turned into some demonic, 2D caricature of his former self. In my opinion, he's an even more complex and interesting character in Soul Reaver than he was in Legacy of Kain.

PSEX: How did the Soul Reaver story come about? Are you just pulling from vampire legends, or is this something that came out of the blue during a brainstorming session?

AMY: We did spend time steeping ourselves in vampire mythology and literature, to get "in the mood," and also to see which ideas were over-used and tired. We began playing with various ideas as Legacy of Kain was wrapping up — the concept for a plane-shifting character (Raziel), and a world divided into physical and spectral realms, began germinating early on. There wasn't a single brainstorming session that spawned Soul Reaver's story — we worked and reworked the ideas over a long period of time and developed the characters and story further, as more people joined the team.

PSEX: So what makes Raziel so powerful? Why can he stand up to Kain when others couldn't? What kind of attacks does he have? What are his weaknesses?

AMY: As a physical (albeit immortal) being, the vampire Raziel was weaker than Kain, his master. Reincarnated as a spectral creature, Nosgoth's first reaper of souls, Raziel no longer suffers the vulnerabilities that all vampires endure. Now truly immortal, he can be wounded, but never really destroyed. He has a suite of attacks — he can slash at enemies with his powerful claws, use objects in the environment as weapons, cast powerful spells, and (eventually) wields the soul reaver against his enemies. His main weakness is that he retains his vampiric hunger — but it's been transmuted into a hunger for souls, not blood. To maintain his manifestation in the physical world, he has to continually devour the souls of his victims — otherwise, his energy will eventually drain and he will be shunted back to the spirit world.

PSEX: From a technical standpoint how hard does Soul Reaver push the PSX hardware? What special tricks can we expect?

AMY: We're doing some very ambitious things with the Playstation hardware — most significantly, we've built the game engine so that the entire world is linked together in a contiguous stream of geometry. In other words, once you're in the game, you never have to wait for a loading event, or fade in and out from black, to transition from one level to another. Every game area is linked logically and

seamlessly to its neighboring areas, so you're never pulled out of the game fiction. This was no easy feat, and is a major technological achievement, since we've got a massive game world, and we're constantly streaming all the game data off of the CD as you play. Secondly, one of the defining features of our game is that the material and spectral realms (two dimensions of the same reality, essentially) exist simultaneously — Raziel, as a spectral creature, must shift back and forth between the two planes of reality to accomplish his objectives. This was always part of the game design, but we only wanted to do it, if we could actually show the world morphing around Raziel in real time — again, not a trivial technical task, but we achieved it. When you morph back and forth between the material and spectral planes, the geometry, lighting and textures all morph in front of your eyes — also, the enemies fade in and out, based on their planar affiliation.

PSEX: About how long a game is Soul Reaver?

AMY: It's hard to say, since it will depend on how a particular player tackles the game. I think that even a player who races through, ignoring secrets and bonus areas, will get at least 40 hours of gameplay out of Soul Reaver. Gamers who work to find every power-up, glyph spell and secret area, can expect to get many more hours out of the game.

PSEX: Any special hidden secrets? What is going to keep the player going?

AMY: There are tons of secret and bonus areas in the game. The whole game design flow is built around the idea of having a world that blossoms out, as the main character acquires new abilities. So, at any one time, the player may have 2-4 options open as to what area to tackle next — every player will likely complete the game in a different order. Much of our design philosophy has been inspired by games like Zelda and Metroid, with their non-linear worlds, where the character's growth dictates the flow of the game.

PSEX: Is story a big concern in Soul Reaver or does the game focus on action more than story?

AMY: Soul Reaver's story is an integral part of the game. We establish the game's backstory in a rendered opening FMA, and continue the story exposition throughout, via in-game (real-time) cinematic events. There are no text screens in the game — the monologues and dialogues are all conveyed using recorded voice.

PSEX: At last year's E3, there was talk of giving the main character a voice. Using voice actors seems to be a Crystal

trait. Is this purely coincidental or is Crystal making the usage of voice actors a goal for future titles?

AMY: Crystal Dynamics takes a lot of pride in the quality of our writing, voice acting and directing — all of the characters in Soul Reaver are portrayed by professional, respected voice actors. Many of the same actors who voiced characters in Legacy of Kain have returned to reprise their roles or portray new characters — including Simon Templeman (as Kain) and Tony Jay. Michael Bell, who's got a list of voice credits as long as your arm, is the voice of Raziel.

PSEX: How did the development team "get into the zone", when working on the game? Any sudden desires for holy water and garlic?

AMY: Is Pepsi and garlic bagels close enough? Early in the development, we read a lot of mythology (vampire and otherwise) to get ourselves into the right state of mind. Also, 90% of the team works in near darkness — the only illumination comes from the glow of their monitors. We're all pasty-skinned, but if it gets us in the mood, what the hell.

PSEX: How does the current version of Soul Reaver vary from your original idea? Is it what you envisioned or something completely different?

AMY: The ideas always evolve over time — new artists, designers and programmers, who join the team bring their own interpretations to the project; and their input and ownership of game elements always evolves the design in positive, new directions. Of course, there are always practical compromises that have to be made (based on time or technical constraints), but that's just the nature of the industry. I think we've been amazingly successful at bringing the game to life as we originally envisioned it.

PSEX: Is Soul Reaver going to be a mature game or is it going to be toned down for the mass market?

AMY: Well... the game is all about hunting down your enemies, impaling or immolating them, and devouring their souls... fairly mature stuff. There will be plenty of blood particles to satisfy our target audience.

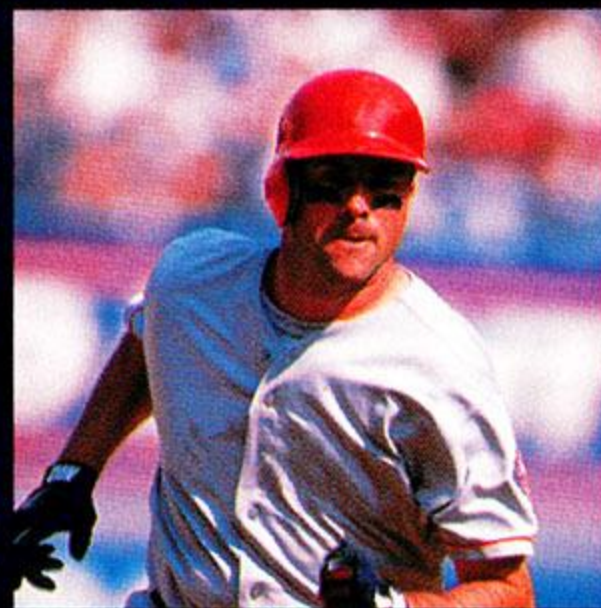
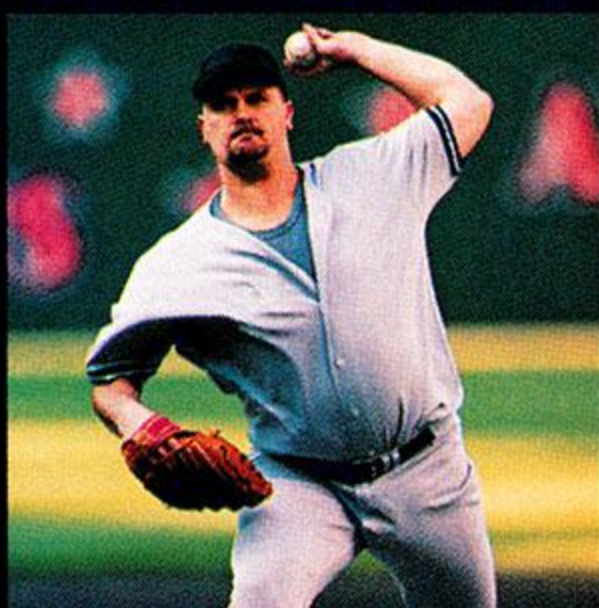
PSEX: Any plans to port Soul Reaver to other platforms or is this a PSX exclusive?

AMY: We are currently working on a PC version.

PSEX: If Raziel and Dracula were to get in a fight who would win?

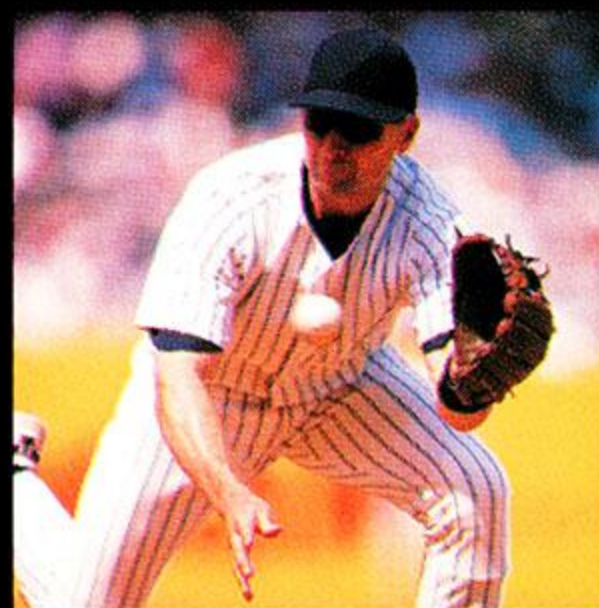
AMY: Dracula wouldn't stand a chance.





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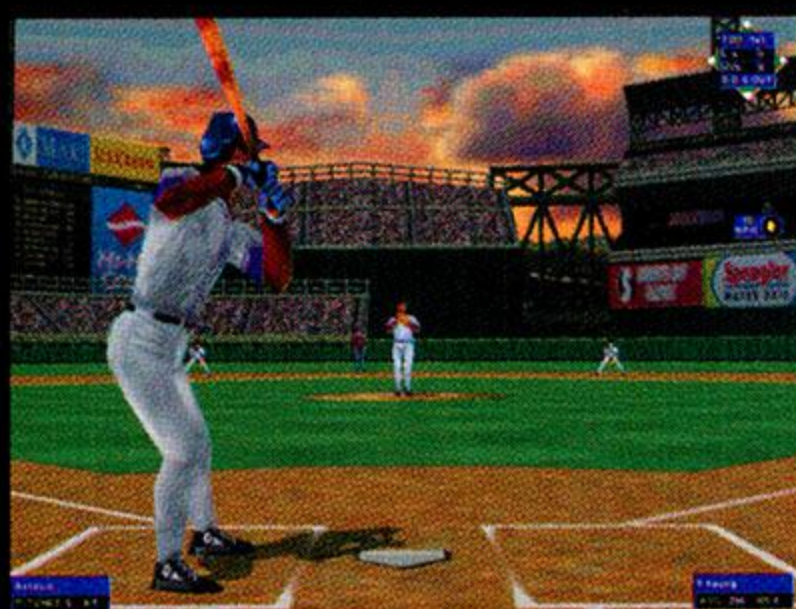
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Inside of three years, Capcom has managed to transition from the lackluster "house that Street Fighter built" to the much more interesting "house of the dead," if you will. This transition couldn't have come at a better time, as the arcade market, which has long been Capcom's bread and butter, is slowly drying up on both sides of the Pacific. Sure there are tons of arcades in Japan, but they're all incredibly small and seem to have the same handful of games (and only one or two of those, to boot). Most of the arcade games you see in Japan these days are music-based, like Dance Dance Revolution, Guitar Freaks and Beatmania, with fighting games relegated to back corners and rows of indistinguishable machines. And, in the US, the coin-op scene is nothing short of miserable, with dedicated arcades disappearing almost altogether, to be replaced by "family fun centers" and the like. It's becoming harder and harder to find arcade games here, outside of a local movie theater.

If Capcom hadn't made the stunning and heavy transition to supporting home systems, they'd be in a heck of a pickle right now (the same dilemma haunting Sega's US release of the Dreamcast, as they'll soon find out). Fortunately, the Resident Evil series has become a top draw for the company, hooking gamers and reeling them in just like the glory days of Street Fighter 2 for the SNES.

Although we've begun to see Capcom take a bit of a Street Fighter approach to the RE series (releasing "Director's Cut" versions of RE1 and 2, weak PC ports and a very delayed N64 version of RE2), we're very excited by the next "survival horror" game, Dino Crisis. While it may initially appear to be little more than Resident Evil in Jurassic Park, the game is so good that the comparison can only help them. I scoffed when I had the game described to me over the phone, immediately blowing it off as nothing more than a blatant attempt to cash in quickly on the success of Resident Evil. But, when I finally saw the game running, my jaw dropped and I turned to the Capcom US staffer sitting next to me (with a smug look on his face) and said, "You guys are going to sell millions of these."

What is it about dinosaurs that make them

so damn appealing? Is it the fact that these monsters actually, at one time, existed? That they're at once both familiar and alien? Whatever it may be, from Barney to Yoshi to Jurassic Park, dinosaurs are a huge lure and big business. Dino Crisis combines reptilian danger with fast-paced action and complex puzzles.

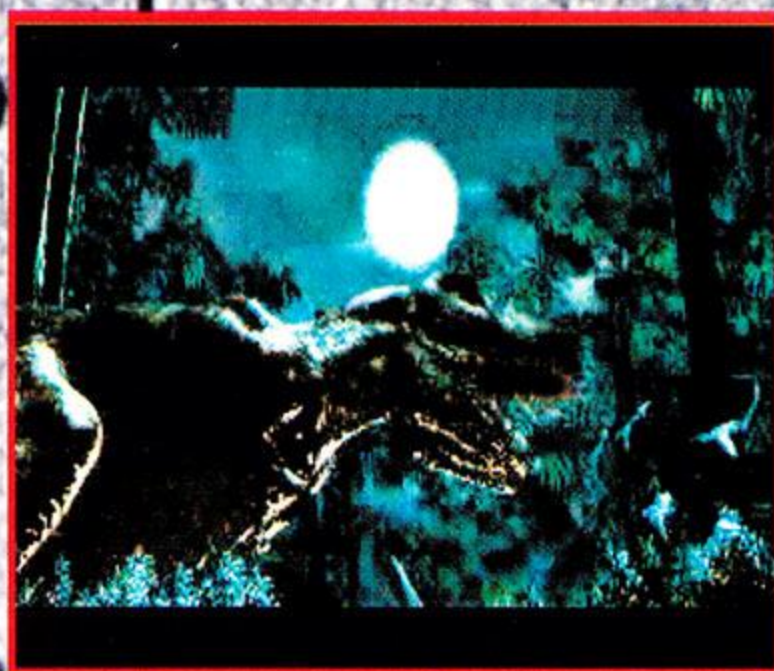
The main man behind Dino Crisis is none other than Shinji Mikami, a nine year Capcom veteran, responsible for games like the SNES version of Aladdin, the cool puzzle game Goof Troop and, in more recent years, the Resident Evil series. Mikami is currently spending the majority of his time producing Dino Crisis, while simultaneously overseeing production of Resident Evil: Code Name Veronica (Dreamcast), Resident Evil 3: Nemesis (PSX), a new title so far only hinted at (possibly called Resident Evil Zero), RE2 for the N64 and the RE Color Gameboy game. That's a lot of survival horror, possibly even more than one man can (or should) take all at once. But, has it all effected him? I traveled to Capcom's Headquarters in Osaka, Japan, for a face-to-face meeting with the man that created one of the biggest selling, and most imitated, genres of gaming in the past few years.

PS Extreme: Is it hard for you to work on so many survival horror titles at once? Are you seeing zombies in your sleep?

Mikami: (laughs) I used to see them all the time, but I'm now past that point.

PSEX: What brought you to Capcom? How did you get started here?

M: I liked the company's games at the time I first interviewed. Capcom held a big introduction meeting, where they brought in all prospective employees and talked



to us. At that meeting, Mr. Tsujimoto (Capcom's CEO) stood up and talked about his dreams for the company and personally guaranteed that Capcom would one day become the number one game company in the world. I knew this wasn't true, but I respected him and thought that this would be a good person to work for. Also, they had a party with free food and drinks, which I liked a lot.

PSEX: Sounds like a tough first job interview. Since that time, you've been producer for a number of Capcom games, but never anything as big as Resident Evil. How do you explain RE's huge success? Was it just the right time for a game like it, or had the earlier hardware systems held you back?

M: I actually had the idea for the game a long time ago but, due to the technical limitations, it just could not be done. Resident Evil was similar in many ways to Sweet Home (a NES game, based on a Japanese horror movie, never released in the US), but I wanted to do my game in 3D.

PSEX: Since RE has become so popular in the past three years, we've seen a lot of RE clones. What do you think of all these games? Are there any you thought were good?

M: I don't care if someone tries to imitate what I've done, just as long as they try to do something original or bring some new element to the gameplay. I believe that the specific flavor of Resident Evil cannot be imitated.

I did like Deep Fear (a Sega Saturn title). I liked their idea of the player having only a limited amount of oxygen, which has to be constantly watched or the player will die. I thought it was really well integrated into the gameplay.

I also recognized the voice of the actor who played Wesker in the original Resident Evil in the game (laughs).

PSEX: Are you happy designing survival horror games? Would you like to break away and do some other games for awhile?

M: I'm really, really happy, unfortunately. I couldn't stop working on these games at this point if I wanted to; I have to keep doing them. A while ago, some of the domestic

sales staff had asked me if I could do a quick puzzle game, something like Goof Troop, where you can just pick it up and play for awhile and then turn it off, but I just don't have the time right now, so we're not going to do it.

PSEX: What do you think of the coming wave of next generation game hardware, like the PSX2 and Nintendo's Project Dolphin?

M: The next generation of hardware gives you a lot of power for graphics and sound, but I think the core fun factor of games will remain the same. The new systems will produce better sound and pictures, which will add something, but they aren't necessarily required to have a great game experience. My concern is that all these games will come out that focus just on the graphics and neglect gameplay and that those types of games will prevail.

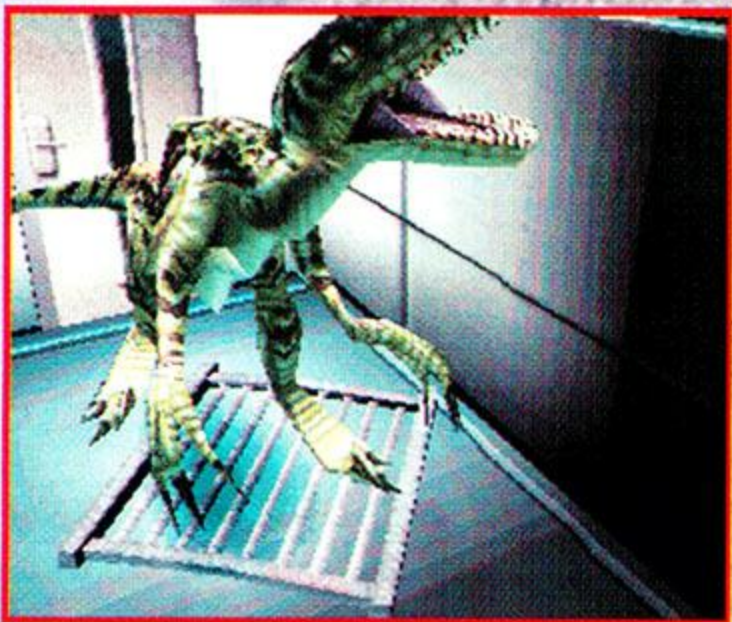
PSEX: Will the Resident Evil series always be about zombies and mutants, or do you plan to take the game in other directions?

M: Maybe with the next-gen hardware, something different will happen, but I'm not sure right now. There will be some big changes from Resident Evil 3 to 4, though.

PSEX: Dino Crisis, like the RE series, is very Western in terms of theme and content. Did you purposefully go into the project with the intent of creating a game that would do well in the US?

M: No, I never intentionally set out to create a game specifically for the US. I think it comes more from the fact that I watch a lot of Western movies. Everyone does in Japan; the culture





is everywhere. I wanted people to have an intense experience, which has been shaped by Western movies.

Also, for us, if we tried to set Resident Evil in Japan, it would look very fake to us. We know what our buildings and cities look like here and it would not have been realistic. By setting the game in the US or Europe, which is farther away and seems a little more fantastic, it carries more reality for Japanese players.

PSEX: Was it hard moving from the pre-rendered background of RE to the full 3D environments of Dino Crisis?

M: It became more difficult to do the game, but I'm not sure if the 3D backgrounds were the most difficult part. 2D and 3D development are totally different issues.

The camera work was the main challenge. It's much easier to express a character's feeling with the 3D camera. You can zoom in and out, which was not possible with RE, where we were forced to work with fixed camera angles. With Dino Crisis, we can show when a player is scared or lonely or unsure, and are able to convey what I really want to show within a scene.

We can also now show exactly which character is the focus of the scene. In RE, you can only tell which character is talking by their hand motions or movements. In Dino Crisis, it's much easier to pan the camera back and forth to show who is talking.

In Dino Crisis, we can also follow characters as they run down a long hallway, which was impossible with Resident Evil. Before, we'd have to take a series of snapshots and constantly change cameras. That felt very stiff and unnatural.

I wanted to take advantage of having a totally free roaming camera for gameplay purposes, but couldn't manage it in time. Maybe we'll use it in the future; not for Veronica, but maybe in the next sequel. Maybe for PlayStation 2...

PSEX: Will Dino Crisis and RE: Nemesis be the last PlayStation games?

M: We haven't decided yet, since we've not yet looked at the next-gen PlayStation. I've seen the demos, but we haven't started looking at tools yet.

PSEX: In RE, it was possible to memorize zombie positions and simply run around them because they were so slow. How is Dino Crisis different?

M: The dinosaurs have very good AI so, depending on where you go within the game, the dinosaurs will appear in different places. Dinos also think for themselves, so how they will chase you is different. They can bite you, knock your gun out of your hand or jump on top of you. They're also much, much faster than the zombies ever were.

Encounter points will be slightly different the second time you play the game. The item location will also be slightly different the second time; not totally reshuffled, but bullets may not be where you found them originally.

PSEX: Wow, that's going to make life difficult for people who rely on strategy guides and hint books to get through the game!. What do you think of hint guides and cheater tools like the Game Shark?

M: I don't really like hint books, but I definitely see the need for their existence. I don't like it when a book comes out the same day as the game and gives away all the endings and spoils the plot.

I really, really don't like GameSharks. It feels like someone has stepped into my house without an invitation and taken a look around.

PSEX: Is Dino Crisis going to be more of an action-based game than RE, or is going to be mainly puzzles? Which type of game do you personally like?

M: Dino is much more of a puzzle game. I like both types of games, personally, but it was more of a design decision to include more puzzles in Dino Crisis.

PSEX: How is Dino Crisis gameplay different from RE? Would you consider Dino Crisis to be a "survival horror" game?

M: Dino Crisis is definitely a survival horror game, but of a different type. The tense feeling in Dino Crisis is much faster-paced than RE. I wanted a rollercoaster feel for Dino Crisis, as opposed to a slow, crawling feel. You have to make quick decisions with the dinosaurs; whether you're going to fight or run. A delay of a decision will lead to a quick death.

PSEX: A lot of Capcom games are beginning to appear as anime (Street Fighter Alpha, Darkstalkers, Powerstone). Any chance of seeing a Resident Evil anime?

M: We've had offers for a RE comic book from Asia, but not in the US or Japan. There would be no way to do Resident Evil as an anime, it would completely destroy the game. Resident Evil is all about real horror and terror; anime is no good. Capcom is working on a movie, but there hasn't been any sort of release date announced and I'm not involved.

PSEX: Finally, what does the future hold for Resident Evil? Where does the game need to go from here?

M: Visual enhancement is a must. Also, after RE3, we're planning drastic changes to the most important element of the game; the horror. That feeling may become secondary in importance. We'll have to see what happens.

Special thanks go out to the following Capcom folks, without whom this piece would never have happened: Matt and Melinda for setting it all up; Robert, Nate and Bob for baby-sitting me in Osaka; and Tom "Little Fish" Shiraiwa for doing all the boring translation.

CHRIS



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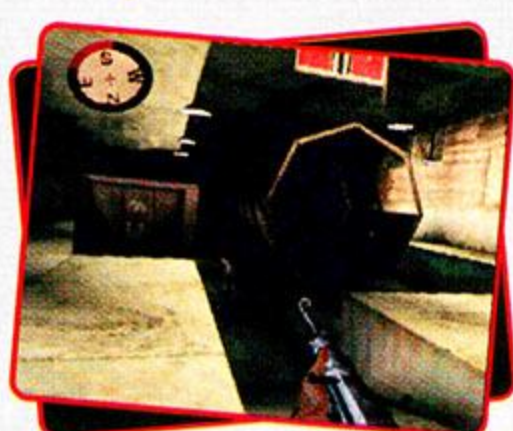
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Agetec promises to continue their tradition of releasing cool and quirky games with their latest fishing title, Bass Landing. Not only do they have one of the most in-depth and comprehensive fishing games for the PlayStation to date, but they are packing it with their own fishing controller. This little beauty has accurate sensors and dual-shock-style motors in it which will allow you to simulate casting your line, hooking a big mouth and reeling him in. While the playable game arrived in our offices just as we were going to press, production halted as the entire DP staff angled to get a go at the controller and the game. We expect to return next issue with a much more in depth look at Bass Landing, as well as a hands-on analysis of their fishing controller.



You read it here first — Medal of Honor will be one of the must-have games of 1999! If it doesn't turn out that way, blame EA, because right now everything's in place to make this FPS (first person shooter) the GoldenEye of the PlayStation. The setting is World War II, and it is up to you to stop the Nazi killing machine. There are 11 different missions, encompassing over 30 3D levels. We met the producers and graphic designers of Medal of Honor recently and were able to view a couple of the game's levels. Besides going "wow" every few seconds, we were impressed by the attention to detail in the levels, as well as the computer enemy AI. Toss a hand grenade at a guard, and he'll bend down, pick it up, and throw it right back at you! Shoot him in the arm as he holds the grenade, and he'll drop it, then get blown to pieces as the grenade explodes — cool! Other goose-stepping Nazis will come running after you if they hear the explosion or gun shots. Check out more on EA's downright amazing Medal of Honor in the next issue of PSExtreme.



Not wanting to be left out of the race, Squaresoft has produced their own cute, character-driven, kart-style game starring our favorite, little, yellow chicken, Chocobo. Their entry, Chocobo Racing, was originally slated to be released at the end of the year, but, for whatever reason, the good folks at Square EA decided to let it fly this summer — good show! Like Mario Kart (or Crash Team Racing), Chocobo Racing pits a cast of Squaresoft's popular Final Fantasy characters against each other, in a race for the pole position. Of course, these cute creatures (which include Mog, Black Magician, White Mage, Chubby Chocobo, Golem, Behemoth and host of secret characters you must unlock — Squall from FFVIII being one of them) are willing to use any means necessary to get to the finish line first, including a variety of magic and power-ups found strewn about the track. The game offers quite a few different modes, such as Grand Prix, two-player Vs., Time Attack, Story (featuring Chocobo's Adventures), and a Relay (a very cool option where you choose three characters and play tag team against your opponents). We will have the complete review in next month's issue.



accolade

DEMOLITION RACER

october

Demolition Racer is the latest racing game to come from Pitbull, the developers of Test Drive 4 & 5. The game makes use of the TD 5 engine to present the player with intense, smash-or-be-smashed racing on 14 different tracks. Players can choose from any of eight different cars and compete against 15 other computer controlled crazies. Besides a two-player split-screen mode, Demolition Racer will offer computer AI that actually reacts to the player, cars that display visible damage as they are shredded by the competition, and destructible objects on the tracks. If Demolition Racer is even half as intense as Test Drive 5 was, the Accolade/Infogrames folks could very well have a hit on their hands.

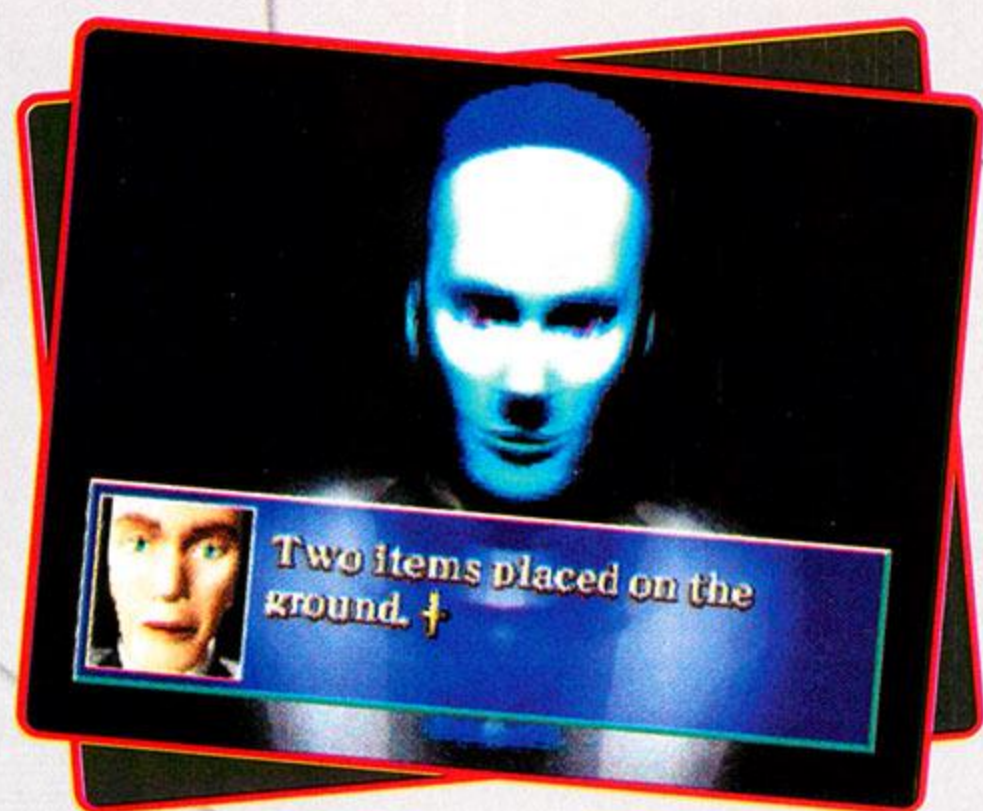


jaleco

JUGGERNAUT

august

Jaleco has an interesting title due for release for this summer by the name of Juggernaut. Playing a lot like a twisted and bizarre combination of Acclaim's D and Psygnosis' Myst, the object of the game is to delve deep into your girl-friend's possessed soul and exorcise the devil who's inhabiting it. This creepy title is filled with cryptic puzzles, bizarre plot lines and disturbing images. Gameplay is carried out by the old and outdated "point-and-click" method, with FMV bits transporting you from one location to the next. Games like this haven't been very prevalent (or successful) on the PlayStation (Silverload, Clock Tower, Myst and Ryven are the only four we can think of off the tops of our heads), but cheers to Jaleco for trying something different.



psygnosis

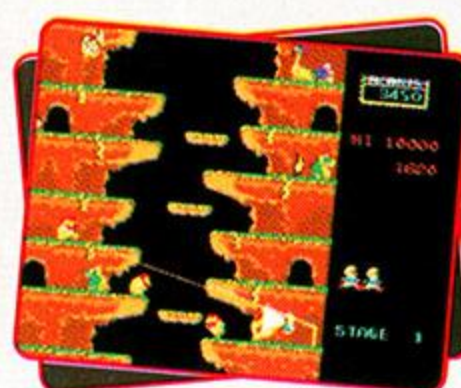
KINGSLEY'S QUEST

september



Psygnosis' Kingsley's Quest is a new action/platform title aimed directly at the younger members of the PlayStation set. It seems that all is not well in the Fruit Kingdom, since the evil wizard, Bad Custard, stole the Book of Magic. It is up to Kingsley to take care of business! This real-time 3D game combines platform, exploration and combat elements centered around the main character, a cute little foxcub. The game takes place over four different environments, ranging from a stormy village to a sun-drenched beach and features 50 interactive, talking characters and nine different bosses. In addition, Kingsley's Quest makes use of 41 different musical tracks — tailored to specific environments and gameplay situations. We had an opportunity to play a little bit of this one. Graphically, it looks like a cross between Ape Escape and Crash, with gameplay environments more reminiscent of Croc. While it is definitely a game for the younger set, moms and dads that play may find the game to be interesting as well. Look for Kingsley to hit shelves in September.





There's a lot of gaming history between the various staff members at Dimension Publishing. Most of us still own, buy and play games on all of our classic systems. So, you can see why we get so excited when another company chooses to re-release some of their classic heritage on today's next-gen systems. Konami's Arcade Classics does just that, with a plethora of great games that hit the arcades (and home consoles) in the early and mid-eighties. Here's the complete list: Scramble, Super Cobra, Gyruss, Pooyan, Circus Charlie, Time Pilot, Roc'n Rope, Road Fighter, Shao-Lin's Road and Yie Ar Kung Fu. While they aren't emulations (according to coin-op expert Toolie), they are perfect translations. Look to next issue for a complete retro blow-out!

mindscape

RAT ATTACK

august



Didn't you know? The mutant rat invasion is on! And the little rodents have a freakish plot; create bazillions of bizarre and deadly rats bent on trashing your house and neighborhood. As one of the Scratch Cats, an elite squad of six feline commandos dedicated to protecting the world from its biggest threat yet, it's gonna be up to you to stop 'em. Developed overseas in the UK by Pure Entertainment, Rat Attack is a combination puzzle and arcade game featuring frenetic action over 50 levels. The game features both single and multi-player options (with up to four players on screen at once), over 50 action-packed levels to progress through (with 15 specifically designed for multi-player), a total of eight Cats from which to choose (shhh, two are secret), colorful, cartoony, high-res, 3D environments running at 60 frames per second, plenty of power ups and environmental objects to interact with, eight boss characters to battle, and many clever and fiendish ways to kill the pesky rodents; including squashing, electrocuting and burning! Currently, Mindscape's Rat Attack is scheduled for an August release.



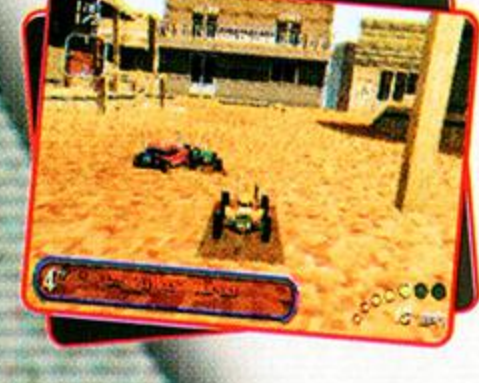
acclaim

REVOLT

september



Re-Volt is Acclaim's latest racing game for the PlayStation. This time around, you are piloting an RC car through a "larger-than-life" human world. In addition to the number of racing environments offered in the game, Re-Volt also features a track editor, offering players the ability to take control of designing and creating their own fantasy racing environments. So far, we have been able to race around in a haunted house, through a toy store and supermarket, and around town. Re-Volt also offers players 20 different cars and a wide selection of weapons and pick-ups, including bottle rockets and oil slicks. If you are an RC fan, you are probably going to want to check this one out. The developers should be wrapping things up pretty quickly, as Re-Volt is on schedule to ship to retail in September.



thq CHAMPIONSHIP MOTOCROSS

august

Originally titled D.I.R.T., this England-based motocross game, developed by Funcom, has found a new home at THQ. Teaming up with motocross legend, Ricky Carmichael, THQ and Funcom are currently tweaking and enhancing the game to deliver the most true-to-life, intense and in-your-face dirt bike racing game ever for the PlayStation. Our latest build features two playable tracks and the ability to play as the two-time AMA National Motocross Champion using his Kawasaki KX250. Even at its early state, the game's graphic engine speeds along at a blinding pace, and features a great camera system, the ability to pull off a variety of tricks, realistic bike physics, and a variety of weather conditions.



sony

UM JAMMER LAMMY

august

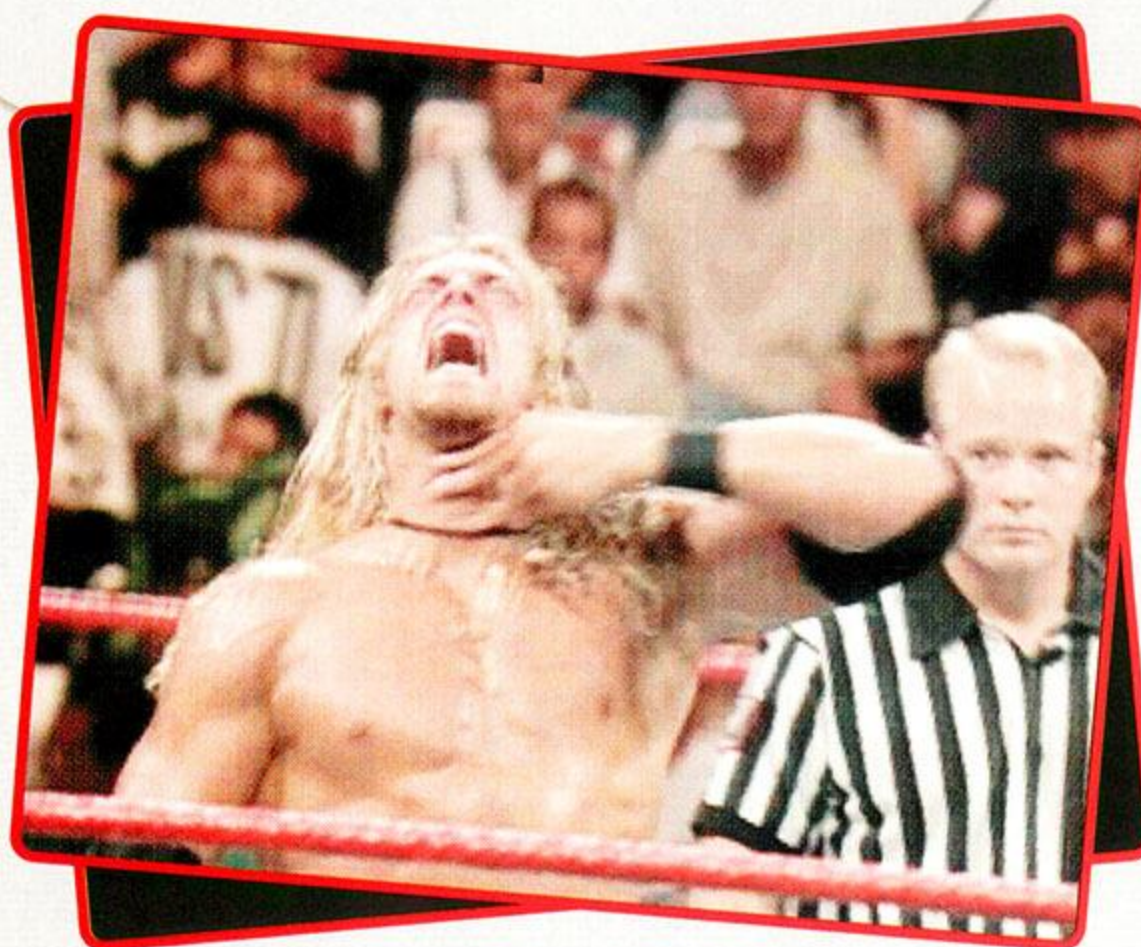
Yes, it's true, we've showcased Um Jammer Lammy, the predecessor to Parappa the Rapper, in each of the last three issues. So, sue us! We love this game (except maybe for Dave, who just doesn't get it). Due to the surprising success of Parappa, we just might be preaching to the choir, but Um Jammer Lammy is one of those rare games that both men and women, adult and child will enjoy and play. This is due to its catchy tunes, quirky and off-beat humor, colorful and cartoony visuals and easy to learn, but hard to master, gameplay. Lammy features a new two-player mode (Team and Competition modes), the ability to play as Parappa the second time through, and a cast of new characters, as well as some returning favorites. Lammy rocks this August!



acclaim

WWF ATTITUDE

july



While none of the Dimension Publishing staff will actually admit to spending time in front of the TV, watching the latest brutal antics of the WWF or the WCW, everybody here seems to know at least a few of the wrestlers and their current affiliations... hmmm. While the battle over the various wrestling licenses has played out like its own soap opera-style wrestling match, Acclaim won the exclusive rights to the WWF for '99 (with EA scoring the WCW license for the year). Riding on the incredible success of WWF War Zone, this year's WWF Attitude promises to include everything but the kitchen sink. The list of playable wrestlers is amazing (40 in total — not including your own creations), which include Stone Cold Steve Austin, Paul Bearer, X-Pac, Goldust, Dr. Death, Shawn Michaels, Triple-H, Sable and The Undertaker (to name just a few). In addition, the game offers an incredible laundry list of features, such as an unparalleled 3D graphic engine, the ability to create your own eight match pay-per-views, a new Career Mode, a total of more than 400 "real" moves at your disposal, and elaborate ring entrances.

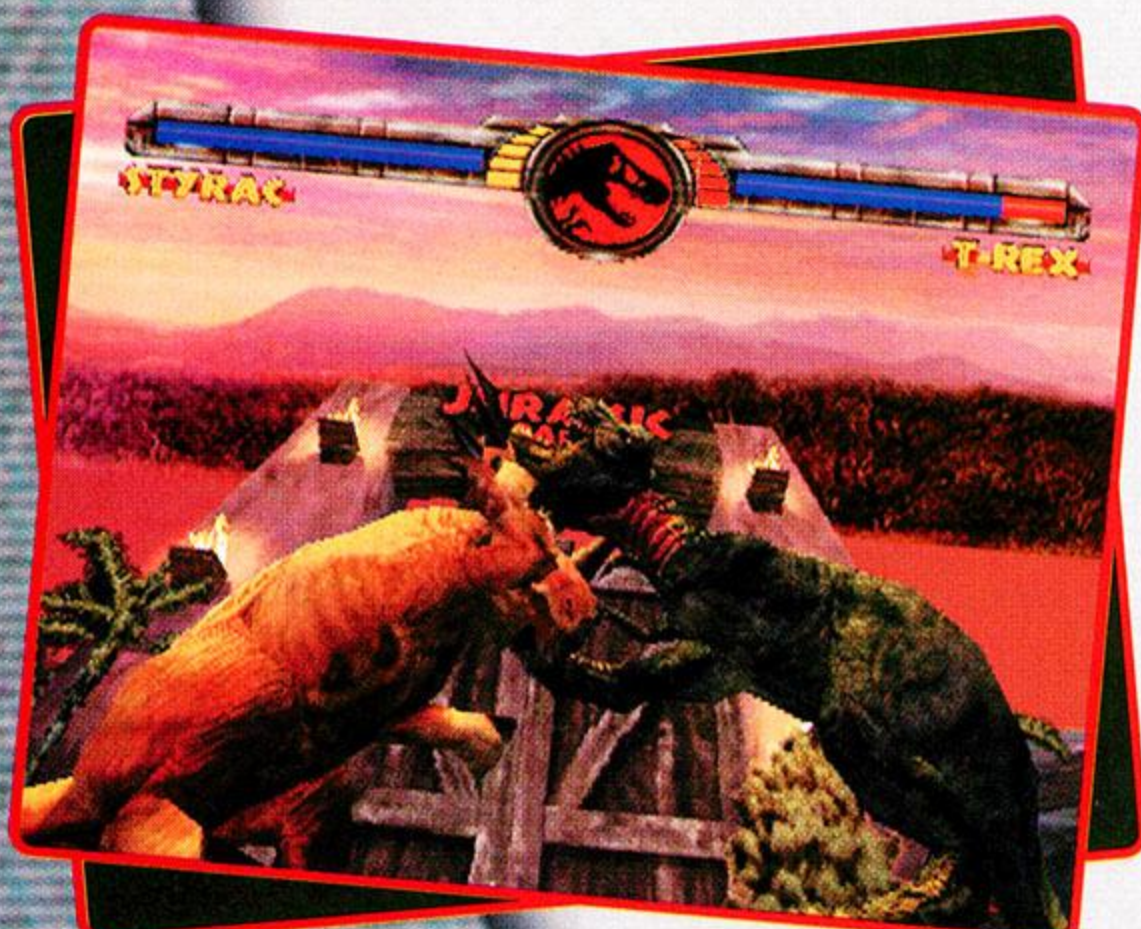




Here's another game you've probably seen a lot of in the pages of PSExtreme. There's a good reason for the ample coverage; EA/Black Ops' Tomorrow Never Dies is going to rock! Although the game has faced numerous delays and revisions, the near-final product is poised to give Syphon Filter, one of our all-time favorites, a run for its money. Based on the movie, you take on the role of 007 as he attempts to put a stop to Elliot Carver and his diabolical plan to start WWII. As Bond, you will have an assortment of hi-tech weaponry, as well as a host of cool Q-gadgets, at your disposal. Of course, no Bond game would be complete without a variety of intense action sequences, including skiing and driving. We're keeping our fingers crossed for a reviewable game in time for next issue.



Sled Storm is a great looking snowmobile racing game from the good folks up in Vancouver, at EA's Canadian development house (Need for Speed series, PGA series, Triple Play, etc., etc.). The game offers racers 14 different tracks; eight "Open Mountain" tracks and six SnoCross (a new sport that takes the tricks and terrain from Motocross racing and plants them in the snow) tracks. The Open Mountain tracks feature a number of hidden routes and chutes that lend more of an exploration feel to the proceedings. The game emphasizes combat by giving players the ability to knock one another off of their sleds and into trees and off of cliffs. Sled Storm features a very clean, fast 3D engine that depicts different types of terrain, including snow, ice, water and mud, and supports both two and four-player, split-screen action. In addition, there are over 50 different tricks that can be performed on the snowmobiles. Successful execution of tricks leads to points that allow players to upgrade and customize their sleds. Look for Sled Storm at a retailer near you in July/August.



Dreamworks' Warpath: Jurassic Park is currently scheduled for an August release. Pitting the movie's deadliest creatures, claw-to-claw, in a rabid contest to be at the top of the food chain, this 3D fighter is looking pretty sweet. Each of the game's 14 dinosaurs will have their own set of razor-sharp teeth and dozens of killer moves at their disposal. While they might have brains the size of peas, these creatures know how to slice, dice, maim and kill. The settings for the game are also based on familiar environments from both Jurassic Park and Lost World, which include the Union 76 station in San Diego and Site B. Currently in joint development between Dreamworks Interactive and Black Ops, Warpath definitely captures the look and flavor of the license. All of the game's Dinos look and sound like their cinematic counterparts (which include the mighty T-Rex and vicious Velociraptors), using an amazingly fluid 3D polygonal engine. The game is coming along nicely at this point, and we will have the complete scoop in next month's issue.



Great Fighters are Made not Born!

It's here, Fighter Maker, the total 3D fighting game! Now you can get your hands on everything you've ever wanted in a fighting game— one or two player 3D fighting action, an incredible arsenal of more than 800 moves, AND professional-quality design tools that let YOU create YOUR perfect fighter. Fighter Maker puts you in total control of every frame of animation, movement, and camera angle as you design your custom fighter from wireframe to unstoppable fighting machine. When you think you're ready, save your creation to a memory card and Kick Ass!

Includes 20 fighters ready for combat in 10 exotic locations



Edit or use any of 800 moves, throws, and juggle combos, or invent something new



Test mode fine tunes your moves for maximum damage



Create ANY move you can think of complete with sound and visual effects



"...a landmark title in the console market."
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GENRE: Action Platform
PUBLISHED BY: Infogrames
DEVELOPED BY: Behavior
ORIGIN: Canada
OF CD'S: 1
AVAILABLE: NOW!

REVIEWED BY:
DAVID WINDING

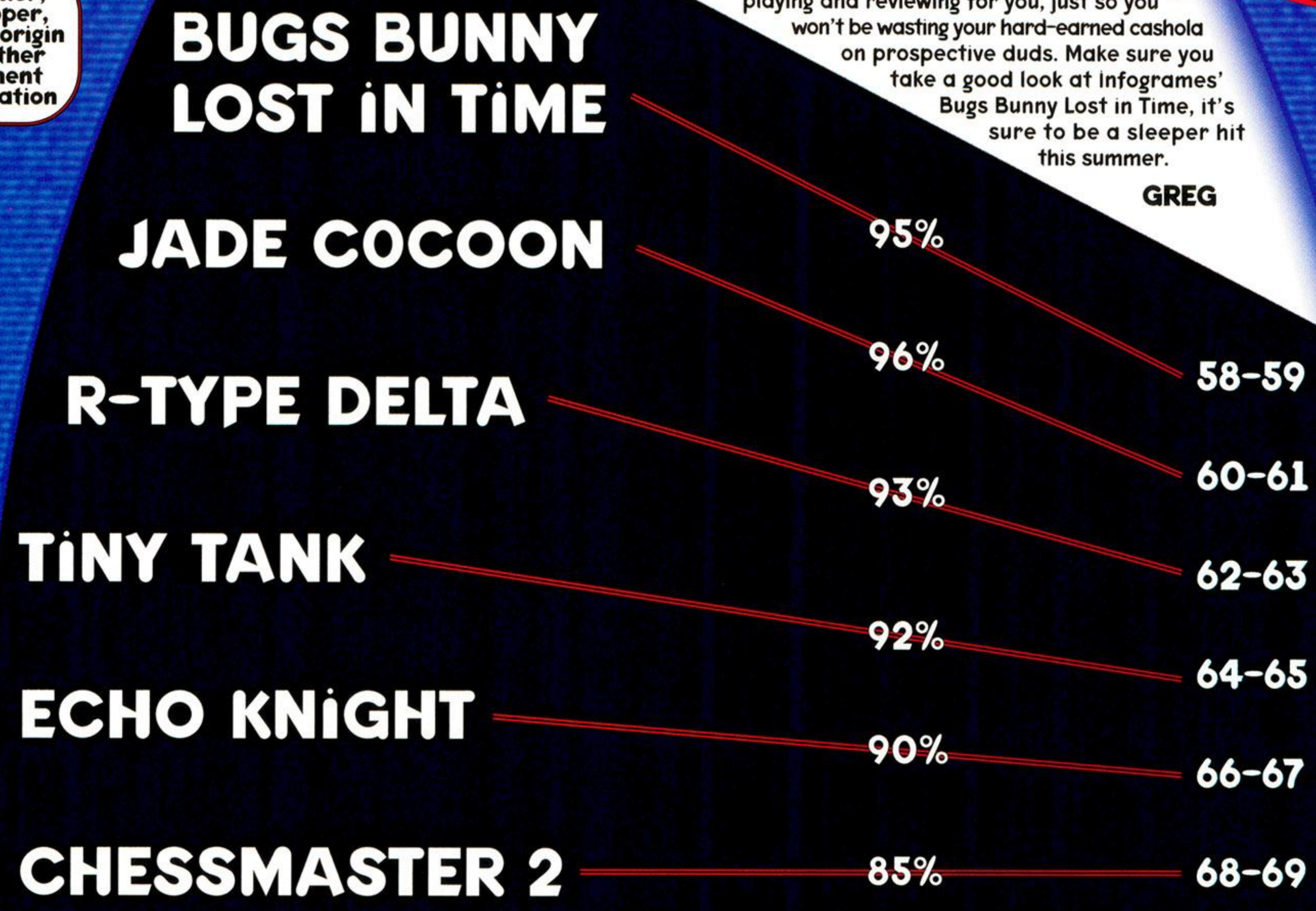
EXrated



The amount of reviewable software picked up a bit this month. In fact, we received a whole slew of reviewable titles (including Crystal D's Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver and Konami's Soul of the Samurai) just as we were closing the issue. These will, unfortunately, have to wait until next month. But, if it's any comfort, just look at the amount of quality, "Gold" games that we did have the pleasure of playing and reviewing for you, just so you won't be wasting your hard-earned cashola on prospective duds. Make sure you take a good look at Infogrames' Bugs Bunny Lost in Time, it's sure to be a sleeper hit this summer.

GREG

Genre, publisher, developer, game's origin and other pertinent information



PS Extreme

SPORTS

ALEXI LALAS INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

If you're in hurry, look here for a quick summary of the review

Alexi Lalas International Soccer is simply anyone that has been over the years, and is going to want to pick up the game with great depth, graphics, music and voice and is just unique enough to make it stand out from the rest of the action/platform pack.

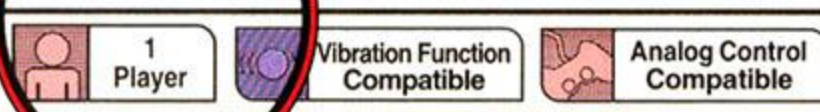
Metalurgy: Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Tin. See page 78 for the complete breakdown



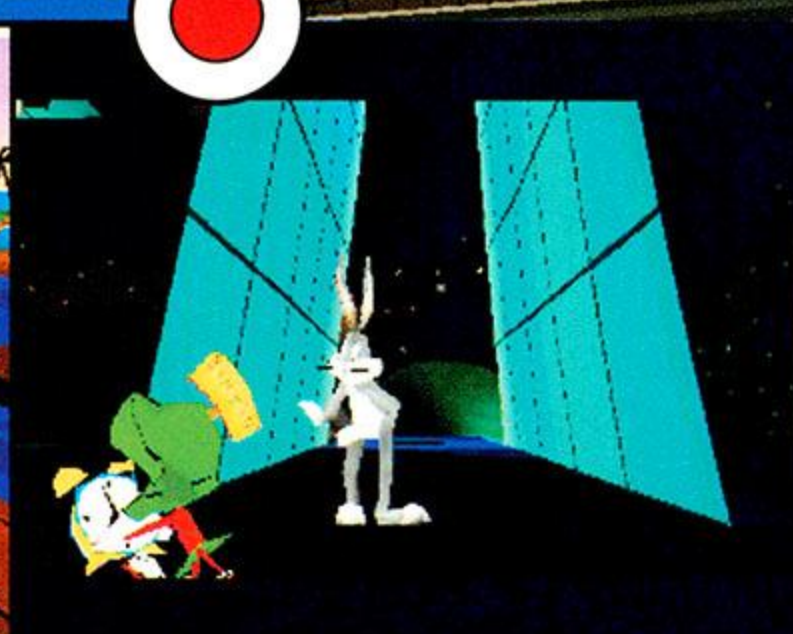
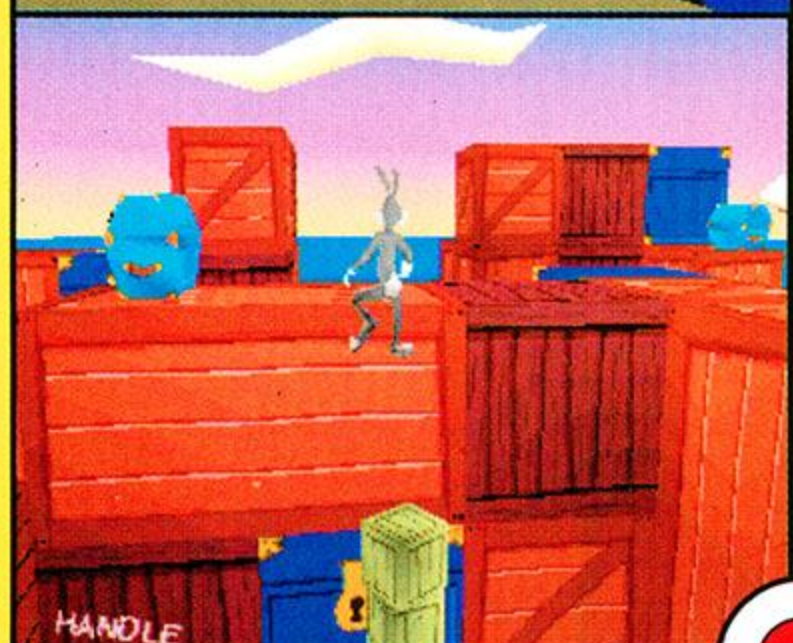
Scores range from 0% - 100%, determining the game's metal ranking

Compatibility information - including # of players and controller compatibility

COMPATIBILITY



BUGS BUNNY: LOST IN TIME

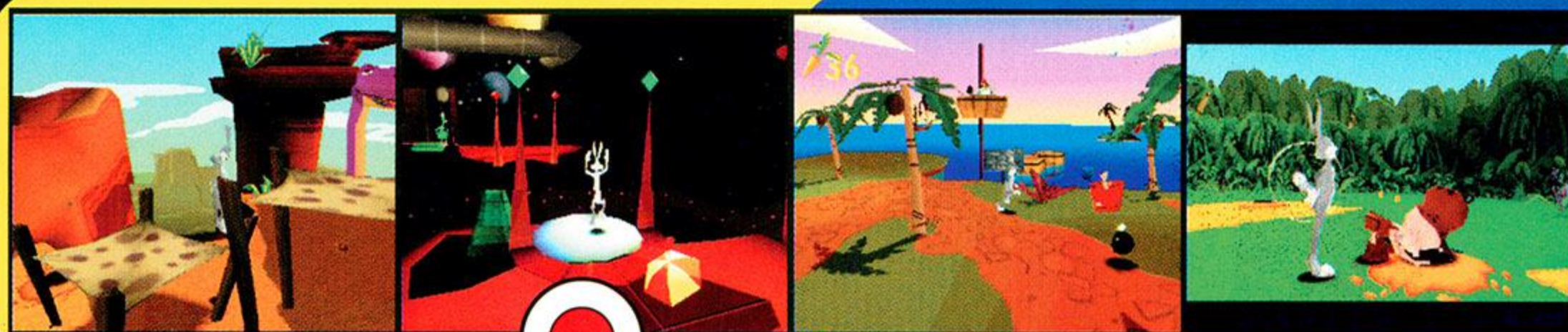


I have been a fan of all things Looney Tunes since Mark, Eric and I were kids and would waste much of our precious youth watching the Warner Brothers animated shorts (along with re-runs of Hogan's Heroes, Get Smart, etc.). While there have been a number of decent games based on LT characters, no game has ever achieved classic status, until now.

Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time is an excellent action/platform title, wrapped up in a Mel Blanc, Chuck Jones and Fritz Freeling package. Developed by Canada's Behavior (the developers of one of the most under-appreciated games of 1998, Jersey Devil) and published in the US by Infogrames, the game gives a wink and a nod to all of the wacky antagonists that have existed in Bug's world over the years, including: Elmer Fudd, Yosemite Sam, Marvin the Martian, Rocky the gangster, Witch Hazel and many, many others. The basic story finds Bugs lost in time... the ultimate "should have taken that left turn at Albuquerque." In order for Bugs to make it back to his rabbit hole, he must retrieve a number of clocks that have been spread out over time and return them to Merlin the magician. While Merlin will help Bugs (checkpoints, helpful hints, save games, etc.), he is, for the most part, on his own. You begin in the Stone Age (Elmer Fudd is the boss-man here) and make your way through pirate levels (Yosemite Sam), the 1930's (Rocky the gangster), the Medieval period (Witch Hazel), the future (Marvin the Martian), and much more.

There is so much game in Lost in Time that it is hard to describe what type of AP it really is. There is a tremendous amount of puzzle solving, clever bosses, a wide variety of enemies and the requisite amount of jumping, climbing and butt-bouncing. As Bugs moves deeper into the game, Merlin will give him additional abilities, including a super jump, musical abilities and more. He begins the game with an impressive cadre of moves, including: jumping, climbing, the ability to dive into a rabbit hole and dig an underground trail, moving boxes and other objects, rolling, kicking (Bugs' main attack), using his ears as propellers — allowing him to hover, and the ability to look around in all directions. The basic gameplay scheme has Bugs moving back and forth between periods of time and, within those periods, finding enough clocks in the levels that are currently open, to open some more. You won't ever open up more than two levels in one time period at once. This has the effect of making Bugs bounce back and forth



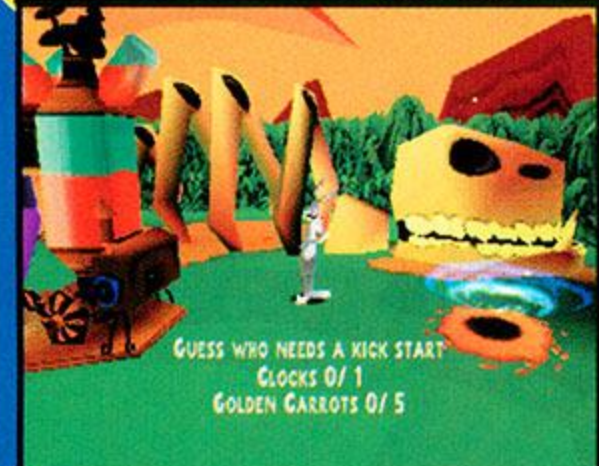
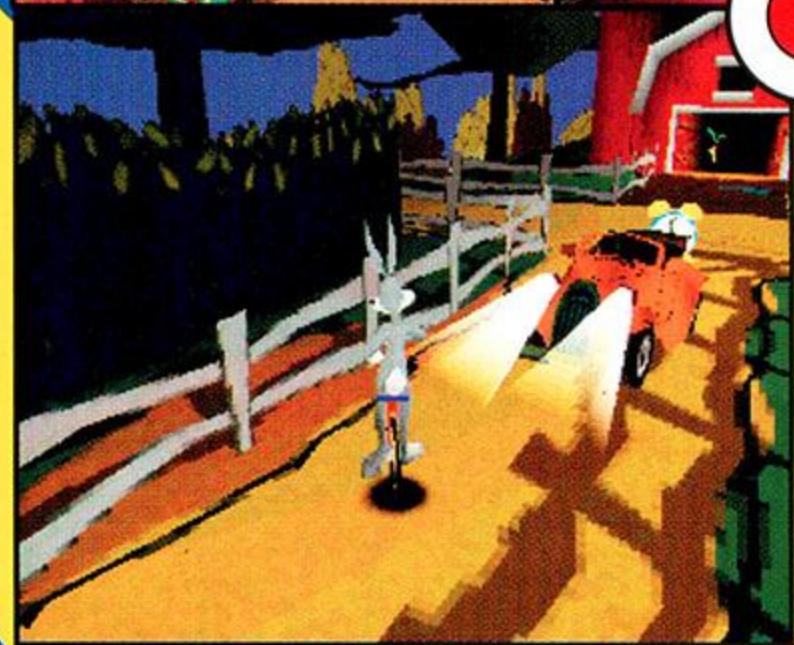


between time periods and of keeping the time period texture sets fresh. In addition, there are areas in all of the levels (once you get past the first three) that require some special, learned moves from Bugs. You will have to revisit the levels in order to get all of the clocks and gold carrots. Gold carrots? Yep, the second of the three collectibles to be found in the game. The third is your garden variety carrot (pun fully intended) that will restore Bugs' health and, if you collect 99 of them in any level within a time period, give Bugs

an additional gold carrot.

Graphically, the game shares a lot of similarities with Jersey Devil, but with much improved animation, bigger level maps and colorful worlds that are right out of the LT school of animation. In between levels and boss confrontations, you are treated to shorts that are extremely funny and very well done — making use of real-time game animation. The frame rate is always fast and never labors. The camera system employed, is similar to GEX, Jersey Devil and Spyro. For the most part, it does a great job of keeping up with Bugs and the action around him — no easy task when you consider that many of the more important enemies will chase Bugs and you will find yourself maneuvering him in circular patterns in order to lay foot to butt.

Of course, no dissection of this game would be complete without talking about the soundtrack and voice characterizations. As all Looney Tunes fans know, Mel Blanc is no longer with us (the voice of every LT character, from Bugs to Tweety and Foghorn Leghorn). But, his son is and he does a great job of it. Every character in the game is done right and you get the feeling that his father would be proud. And the soundtrack is every bit as interesting and well done as the voices. Music was always a big part of the LT experience and it hasn't been short-changed in the game.



The only negative point I have to make about Lost in Time, is that there isn't a whole lot in the game design that is original. Most of the bits you will probably have played before, with the exception of some of the boss confrontations. Of course, this same complaint can be lodged for most of the action/platform titles on the market. What makes Lost in Time exceptional is that it doesn't stray too far away from accepted, successful AP gameplay, while bringing all of the magic of Bugs Bunny and Looney Tunes to the package.

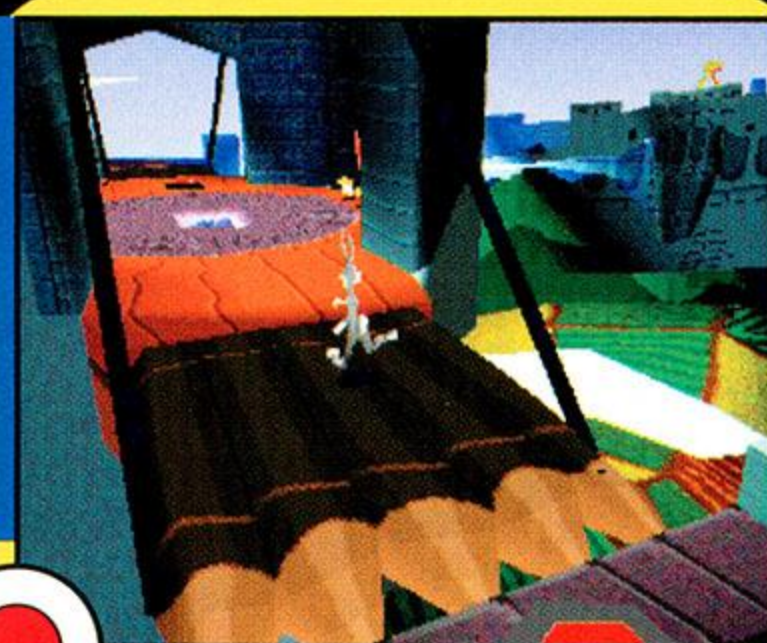
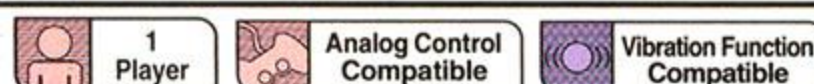
If you are an AP or Looney Tunes' fan, don't hesitate to pick up Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time. It has great depth, super gameplay and is presented within a world that is both visually and aurally attractive... highly recommended.



BOTTOM LINE

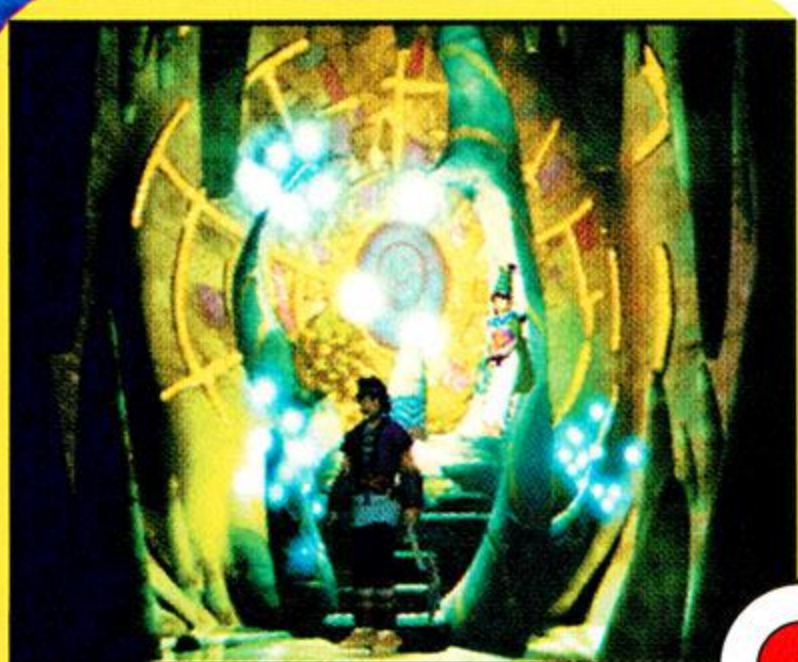
Bugs Bunny: Lost in Time is simply a great game. Anyone that has been a fan of Looney Tunes over the years, and that owns a PlayStation, is going to want to pick up this game. It has great depth, graphics, music and voice and is just unique enough to make it stand out from the rest of the action/platform pack.

COMPATIBILITY



GENRE:	RPG
PUBLISHED BY:	Crave Entertainment
DEVELOPED BY:	Genki
ORIGIN:	Japan
# OF CD'S:	1
AVAILABLE:	NOW!

JADE COCOON

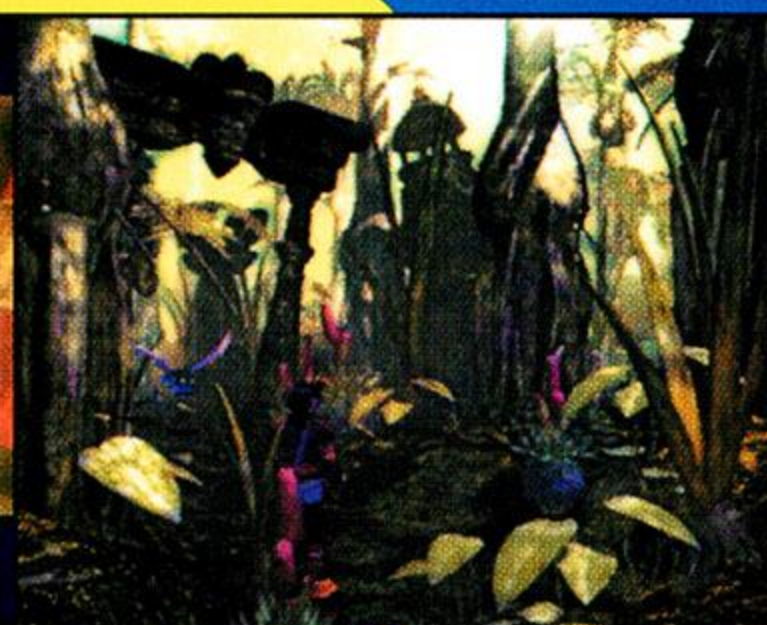
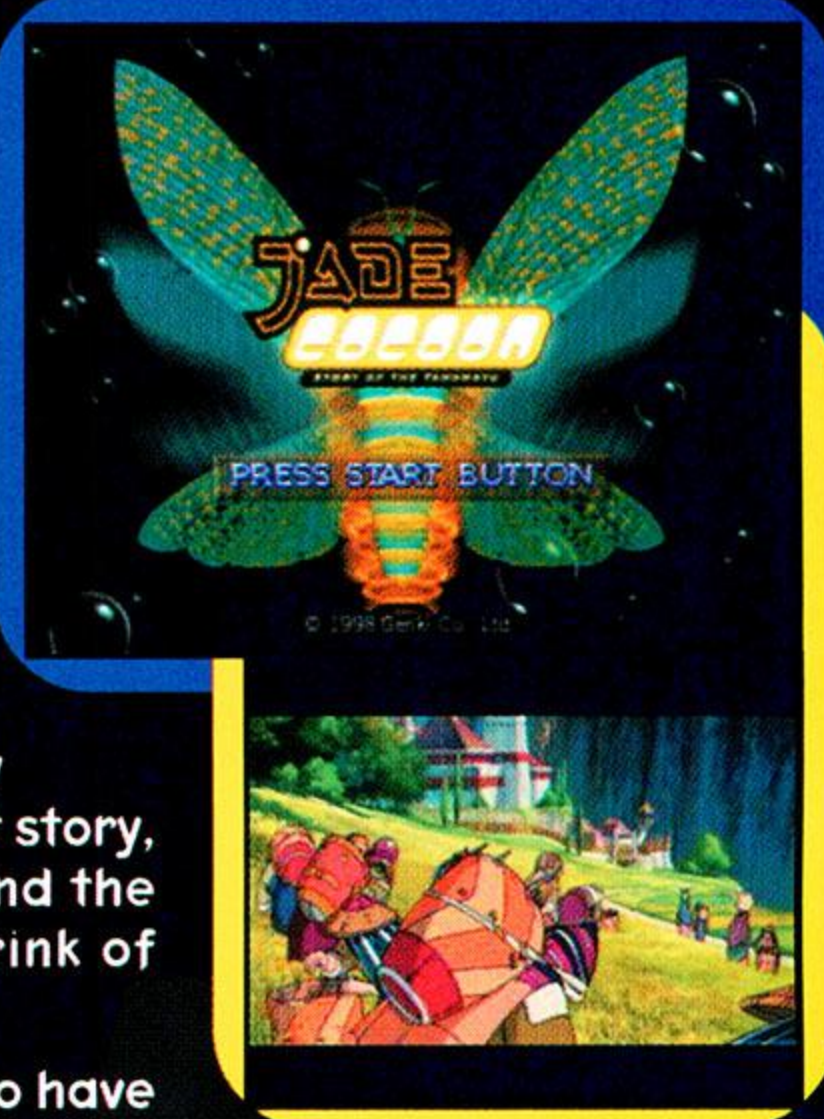


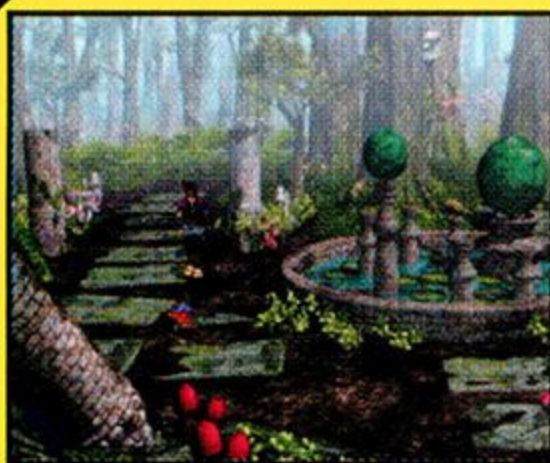
I figured what better way to start off this review than with a nice "cocoon" reference, maybe a little something about Jessica Tandy or Steve Guttenberg. But, alas, I couldn't think of anything, sad, huh? So, without wasting any more space on frivolous text that has nothing to do with the actual review which you are reading exactly at this moment in time, probably on your couch or at school or somewhere else, I will get right to it, Jade Cocoon: Story of the Tamamayu, brought to us by Crave Entertainment, is what RPGs are all about. Great story, complex characters, lavish worlds, solid gameplay, and the never-ending quest to save a civilization from the brink of destruction.

Many of you may be already fortunate enough to have played the Jade Cocoon demo, which was packaged with their other recently-released role playing game, Shadow Madness. No doubt, it left you wanting more, more, more! For those who have not had a chance to see the demo yet, Jade Cocoon follows the life of a young cocoon hunter, Levant, as he struggles to learn the ways of the cocoon hunter. His town is being terrorized by minions of evil, their buzzwords revolve around gods, curses, and fate. From here, the story takes on a life of its own. There are a good amount of characters that get involved, many of whom are interesting, to say the least. One of my main (and only) gripes about the game, is that the story lacks the instant hook to draw you in. Like some paperback novels, it takes awhile for the plot to really sink in and make you want to keep playing.

While this isn't a big criticism, I recommend that you keep going if you find yourself disinterested at first. Additionally, voice-over is supplied for all key interactions and characters — needless to say, that helps to provoke emotion and get a feel for the moment.

As you can (hopefully) tell by the screen shots, this game is drop-dead gorgeous. Absolutely one of the prettiest games I have yet to play on my now four year old gray box. All the backgrounds are pre-rendered, and polygonal (aka mean) enemies are wandering about aimlessly as you navigate your way through the forests and such. The character design was supplied by Katsuya Kondo, who is amazing. Not only that, but the levels are all uniquely colored — some vibrant and bright, while others are dark and foreboding. I was literally flabbergasted (biggest word I've ever used) the first time I walked into the Spider Forest. It was an amazing experience.





And it only gets better as the game goes on. Seeing how much stuff is packed into each backdrop is quite astounding — just try finding all the dinosaur bones in the Dragonfly Forest. There are various cut scenes done via the game engine that will be pleasing to the eye as well.

But, as my mom likes to point out, looks can be deceiving. What does she know? How could Denise Richards ever be evil? In Jade's case the ol' adage doesn't hold up either. Jade Cocoon plays as well as it looks. The

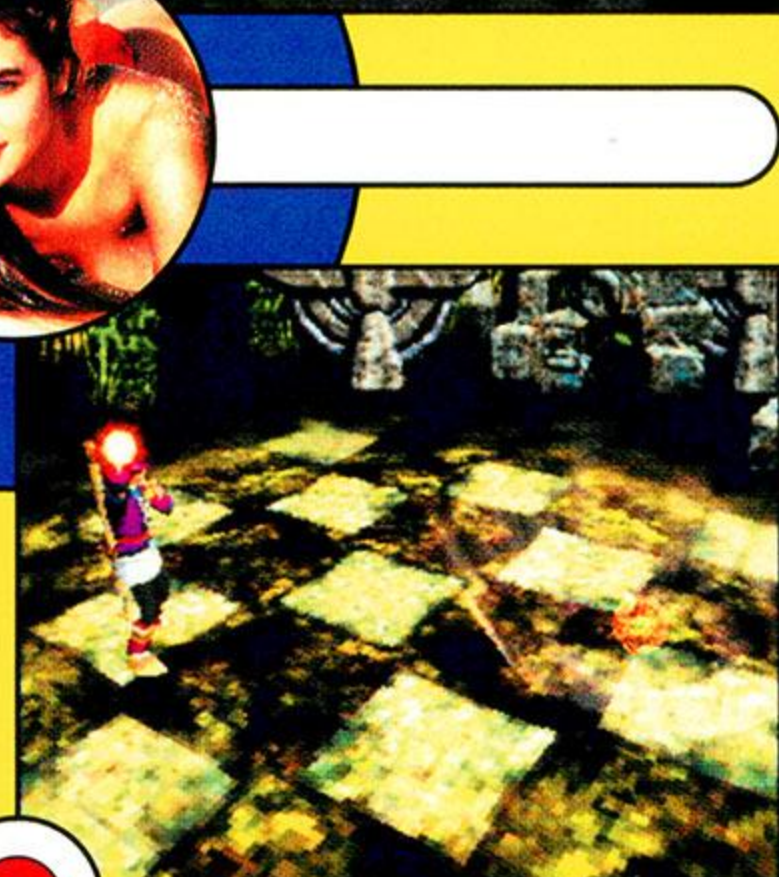
character movement controls like Resident Evil, the menus are intuitive and easy to navigate, and the battle system works perfectly. Believe me, this is pretty close to RPG perfection.

One of the things that makes Jade Cocoon stand out, is its unique monster system. As the story goes, each enemy you encounter was once just a normal animal, but the wrath of the gods turned them into something fierce. So, your primary objective is to take them alive (I have the Blue Pokemon), purify them, and create your own legion of divine beasts — or you can sell 'em for a nice profit. Once captured and cocooned, the beasts can then be merged with one another to create more powerful ones. Now we are sounding like Master of Monsters. Each minion is made up of one of four elements that act in rock-paper-scissors-like fashion when fighting. Merging monsters can help to make a bi and even tri-elemental being. Also, appearance, magic, and attributes all get altered. When confrontations begin, you can now switch between three of the minions you have captured.

Onto the sound; the music is right on in delivering the mood. There are a bit too many flute lines played and after awhile they just scream Zelda or Zamfir, your call. The voice-over is all well done, with the exception of some of the female characters, Crave managed to enlist some annoying, squeally voices. But the sheer emotion in what the characters were saying made me listen to what they were talking about and, as an added bonus, the voice loads quickly.



Once the game has played out, in other words, after about 35 hours, you will then have the opportunity to go back into the "Eternal Corridor" and capture minions that you may not have encountered the first time around. Why would you want to do this, you ask? The answer; so that you can have some sweet-ass monster to throw against your friend in the two player battle arena. The two player mode is definitely fun, if you and your buddy have some cool merged stuff that are relatively evenly matched. The fights are turned-based and use the same menus as the regular game. This definitely adds to the replay and fun of the experience.



BOTTOM LINE

Ultimately, while not perfect, Jade Cocoon is a spectacular game. It is, hands-down, one of the best RPGs to date, ranking up their with the PlayStation RPG elite (Final Fantasy VII, VIII, Wild Arms, Vandal Hearts, etc.). Incredible graphics, killer gameplay, and an all-around, well put-together presentation make this one that fans of the genre must pick up. You will not be disappointed. I guarantee it!

SCORE:
PSExtreme
GOLD
X
EDITOR'S CHOICE

96%

COMPATIBILITY

1 or 2 Players Vibration Function Compatible

GENRE:	Shooter
PUBLISHED BY:	Agetec
DEVELOPED BY:	Irem
ORIGIN:	Japan
# OF CD'S:	1
AVAILABLE:	NOW!

R-TYPE DELTA



In the year 2164, the world has been... oh, nevermind! Does the storyline really matter? Not in a shooter! All you need to know is that you've got a ship with which to destroy enemies... and everything in sight is an enemy!

R-Type Delta is based upon a classic coin-op from the late 1980's. Both the arcade game and this update can be distinguished from other shooters by their use of a force unit. This tiny pod floats near your ship and, depending upon which type you choose, can destroy objects with an energy stream connected to your ship, or will seek out and destroy everything in your path. These force units provide the game with an additional level of strategy. While attached to your ship, they boost firepower but leave you more vulnerable. While floating free, they can better protect your ship but you will lose power. The successful R-Type Delta pilot will learn when to hold 'em and know when to fold... I mean... know when to release 'em.

Weapons can be powered up by flying over the icons which appear at various intervals. Not only does your ship and force unit fire a regular weapon, but you can also unleash a more powerful beam attack by holding down a button. The firepower in this game is unbelievable! Just when you think you've maxed out your weaponry, along comes a power-up which creates an even bigger and badder energy discharge. There is also the delta weapon, which is powered up by enemies making contact with the force unit. This blast will distort the screen as if you dropped a boulder into a swimming pool. Good luck trying to focus on your ship after one of these babies goes off! The awesome firepower is not limited to your ship alone — the enemies and other bosses have quite a few creative ways of blasting you into oblivion.

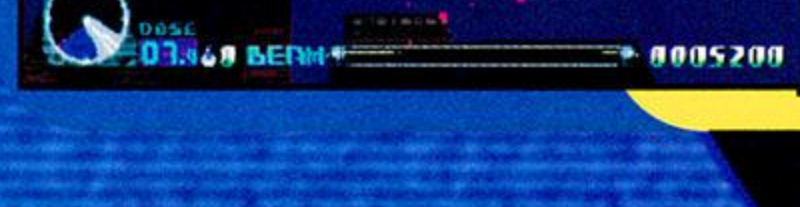
There are no speed power-ups as in prior R-Type games. Instead, you can use the L1 and L2 buttons to control your ship's thrust. When finesse is required, slow the ship down to maneuver around obstacles. When you are about to be stomped on by a giant robotic foot, speed up to slip under and away from it. Just don't forget to slow down again or you will be zipping around like Calvin after three bowls of Crunchy Sugar Bombs.

If you are a fan of R-Type, you might recognize a few of the bosses which mimic those found in the original game. Many of the powered-up weapons seemed vaguely familiar as well. This is not to say that the game is merely a dressed up version of R-Type. There are lots of new enemies and environments which take full advantage of the PlayStation's abilities. I particularly enjoyed the level which took the ship underwater

R-TYPE DELTA

PERFECT START! EASY TO PLAY

© IREM SOFTWARE ENGINEERING INC.





— complete with shimmering lights, shadows, and splashes (from the robotic piranha, of course). The graphics are simply amazing in this and all the other levels. I almost wish they were a bit uglier so I wouldn't be so tempted to watch the surroundings when I should be watching my ship instead.

The designers added to the feeling of three dimensions by constructing horizontally-scrolling levels in the shape of a tube. It's hard to explain. If you hover close to the bottom of the screen, the "tube" rotates slightly towards the camera

to allow you to see details on the ground. If you fly the ship higher, the tube rotates away from the camera so that you can see more of the sky. Despite this nifty effect, and the fact that the graphics consist of three-dimensional polygons, the gameplay is strictly 2D. There are no unique three-quarters viewpoints, as in *Einhander*, for example. You are either scrolling horizontally or vertically, and even if your ship can flip over from time to time it doesn't affect the way you dodge and shoot enemies. *R-Type Delta* is on "rails," as most shooters are, and although the camera changes position from time-to-time, the designers didn't take advantage of the added dimension to try anything new.

I guess that is my main criticism. The gameplay hasn't evolved since the days of the original. You still must collect power ups, avoid enemy fire, shoot everything in sight, and learn the Achilles heel of each boss. Even the options haven't changed. Although there is a picture gallery and record keeping, and three levels of difficulty to choose from, there is still no password system to skip levels. I'm sure this is a throwback to classic arcade games, where the object was to get a higher score each time you put in a quarter. However, the goal of many modern shooters is not just to score the most points, but also to reach the ending. In addition, since I've already spent 160 quarters to buy the game, I'd like it to have as much replay value as possible. An optional password system definitely increases the replay value. It takes a few lives to figure out the weaknesses of each boss, when you first encounter them. When your five continues run out, you'll have to start over from the beginning. This means that you can only progress in small increments. Worse, if you need to turn off the game to attend to more urgent matters — such as eating a balanced meal, earning a living, or leaving a burning building — you cannot start again where you left off.

Still, I'm betting that many of you don't care if the game adds anything new to the genre or not. You just want a great shooter, and *R-Type Delta* certainly delivers. Far from being just eye candy, the game plays as smooth as a hot knife through "I Can't Believe It's Not Butter." You can really get into the zone in this game — hypnotically dodging and shooting until the outside world is completely drowned out (a great advantage, if your outside world includes barking dogs or crying children).

COMPATIBILITY



BOTTOM LINE

R-Type Delta has everything you could hope for in a 32-bit shooter — breathtaking graphics, a decent soundtrack, awesome weapons, unique enemies, challenging bosses, and a variety of levels. It doesn't stray too far from the tried and true formula, and could have benefited from a two-player cooperative mode, as well as a level password system. That said, it is still probably the best of the genre.



TINY TANK

UP YOUR ARSENAL



Originally produced by MGM Interactive, Tiny Tank has been trapped in development limbo for the last six months. We were unsure of the game's fate until recently, when we learned that the game is now being published under the Sony banner and it is finally ready for release.

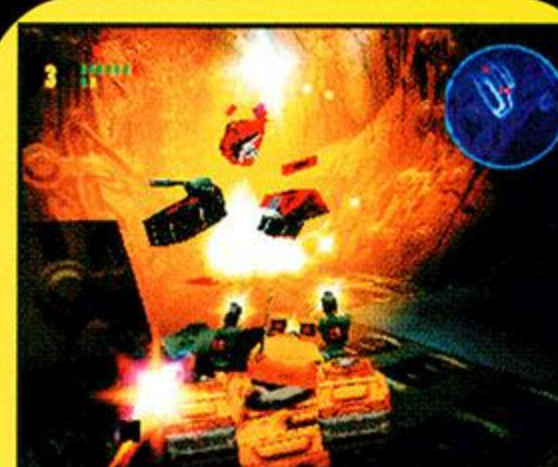
Set in the year 2198, Tiny Tank is essentially a third person shooter with personality. As the story goes, in the year 2098 humans invented sentient robots to fight the wars. Tiny was the "loveable" mascot designed to elicit sympathy, and votes, from the mass public. He did the job well, and the first war robots were created.

Unfortunately for the humans, and for Tiny, one tank decided to rebel. MuTank disabled Tiny and lead the robot warriors against their human creators. Now, 100 years after their creation, the robots rule the planet and the humans are living in fear in underground caverns. MuTank plans to remove the atmosphere from the planet because oxygen causes the robots to rust and decay. As a side bonus when the air is gone, all of the humans will die. Thankfully, Tiny's auto-repair functions have been working. It took them 100 years to get Tiny back on-line, but he's back — and he has an attitude!

Tiny's mission in life is to rescue the humans and defeat MuTank. To aid him in his quest, Tiny has the ability to use weapons from defeated foes, as well as capturing AI brains. The weapons are fairly self explanatory, you just pick them up, place them on Tiny and then point and shoot. The brain feature, however, is a little more complex, but it is darn cool.

Each of the five weapon emplacements on Tiny's body can have up to five brains installed. Each brain that is added to a weapon makes that weapon "smarter". When the maximum amount of brains are installed on a weapon, that weapon will seek out and destroy any targets within range. This is a very nice feature, especially in the heat of battle when enemies must be destroyed quickly. Brains and weapons can be redistributed at any time, which makes the feature quite useful.

Controlling Tiny is a simple matter. The directional pad and left analog thumbstick move Tiny around, while the shoulder buttons and the right analog stick control Tiny's nose turret (yes he has an 80 millimeter gun for a nose, he is a tank after all). Tiny has the ability to shoot, jump, hover slightly, slide left and right and roll to avoid danger. He also has four mini-tanks, which can be sent out to retrieve





items or assist in a battle.

The camera is just above and behind Tiny, but for all intents and purposes, it might as well be a first person view. All of the elements of a shooter are here.

Tiny Tank's soundtrack deserves special mention because of its innovative nature. Instead of simply blasting techno music at the player, Tiny Tank presents the world of the robots to the player via a radio station. Throughout the game, Tiny picks up the one and only radio station broadcasting to the planet. Sometimes it is music — which

is quite good in its own right — other times it is a call-in radio show, and still other times it is a news show. The various bits are quite amusing and provide the background story to the player without hitting you over the head with it. I actually found myself turning down the sound effects whenever one of the radio shows "came on the air."

Of course the radio shows aren't the only amusing part of the game. As I mentioned earlier, Tiny has an attitude, and he has no problem showing it. Throughout the game, Tiny will let loose with sarcastic quips about the action on-screen. After long play sessions it can get mildly repetitive but, overall, the voice acting is quite funny.

Tiny's personality (and more of the story) is also presented via cinema scenes every few levels. After watching the first few, you'll find yourself playing through the game if for no other reason than to see the next cinema. The animation is great, and the dialogue is even better. The cinemas could be released as animated comic shorts and be successful in their own right.

Unfortunately, Tiny Tank has a few flaws which prevent it from becoming a truly stellar title. The first is the in-game visuals. While the environments look decent, the texture maps are a bit drab and can be repetitive within a level. Large areas have a limited range of sight and clipping was obvious in a few places. On the upside, the game engine is fast and stable, so the trade-off in visual quality is somewhat acceptable.

Another minor issue with the game is the linearity of the maps. Tiny Tank is just begging for large levels with plenty of exploreable areas. The game gives you a decent amount of ground to cover, but you are always moving from point A to point B directly. A little more "open-ended" level design would have helped the game.

The final flaw in the game is the level of difficulty. On normal, the game is easy enough to play though and the majority of the enemies seem to use a very basic pathfinding AI. It would have been nice to see something a bit more complex here.

All of the game's flaws are forgivable, but they prevent Tiny Tank from receiving our coveted Platinum award. The little bugger is just gonna have to be happy with a Gold.

BOTTOM LINE

If you're looking for a game that doesn't require a lot of thought and is just plain fun, then Tiny Tank is your game. Don't be dissuaded by the childish-sounding name. Tiny Tank is a gamer's game, and it has some dialogue that would make your mother reach for the soap. Look for this one on the store shelves. It is worth picking up.

COMPATIBILITY



SCORE:
GOLD
X

92%

ECHO NIGHT

GENRE:	Adventure
PUBLISHED BY:	Agetec
DEVELOPED BY:	From Software
ORIGIN:	Japan
# OF CD'S:	1
AVAILABLE:	NOW!



Before there was Final Fantasy VII, there was King's Field — a title memorable for being the first U.S. PlayStation RPG. Although its three-dimensional combat and exploration was unique at the time, the graphics are simplistic by today's standards and the game moves pretty slowly.

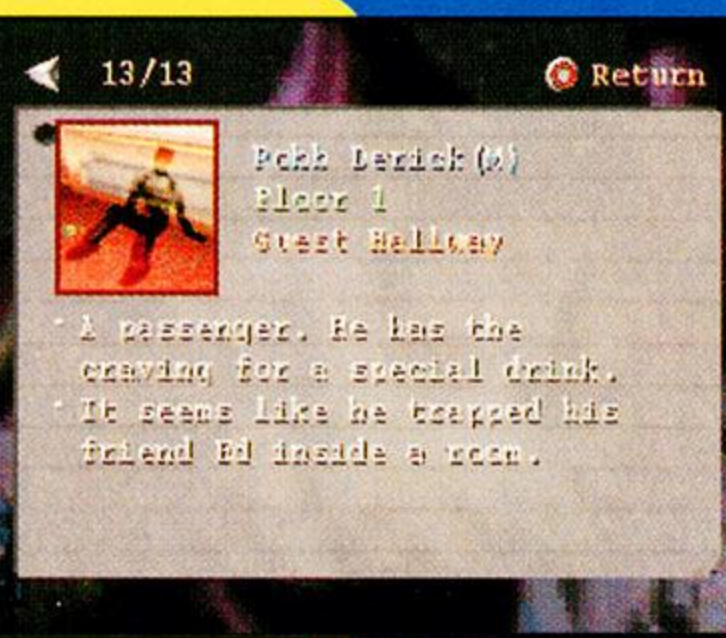
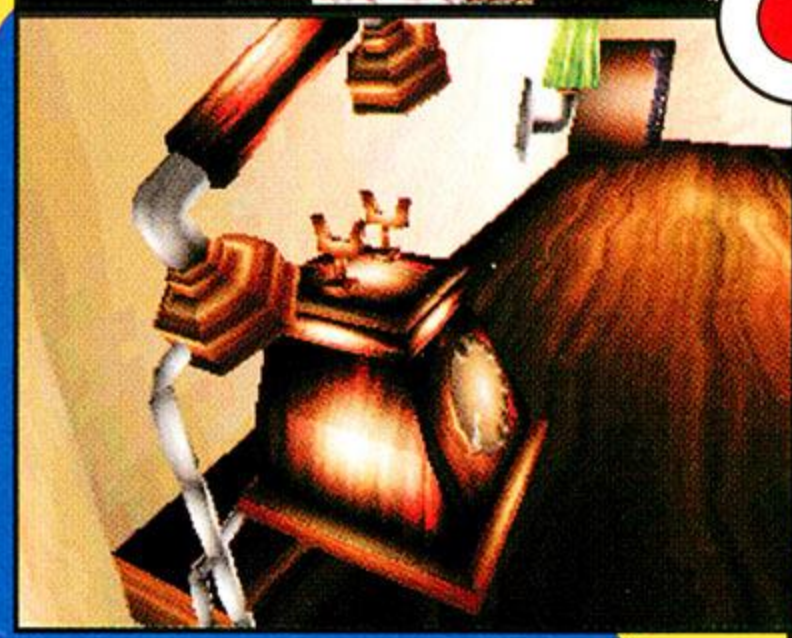
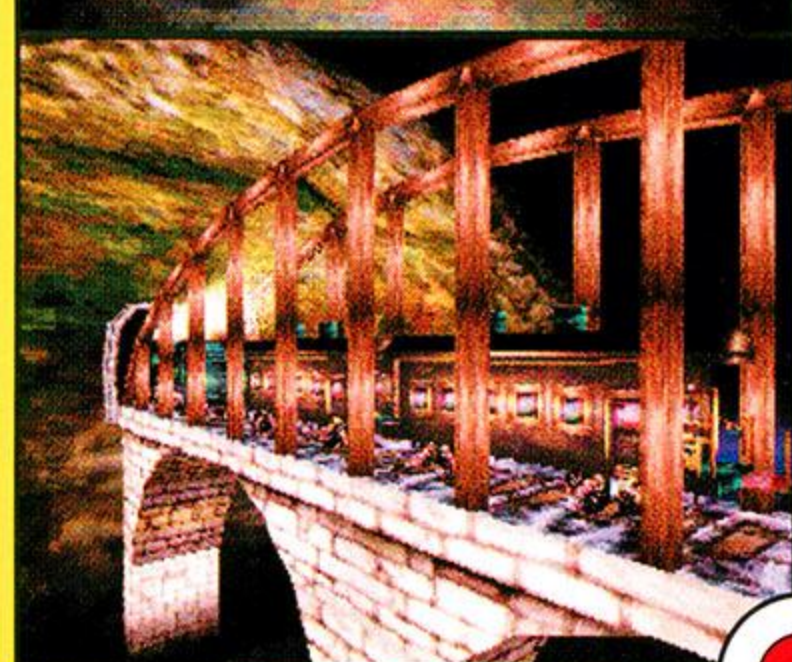
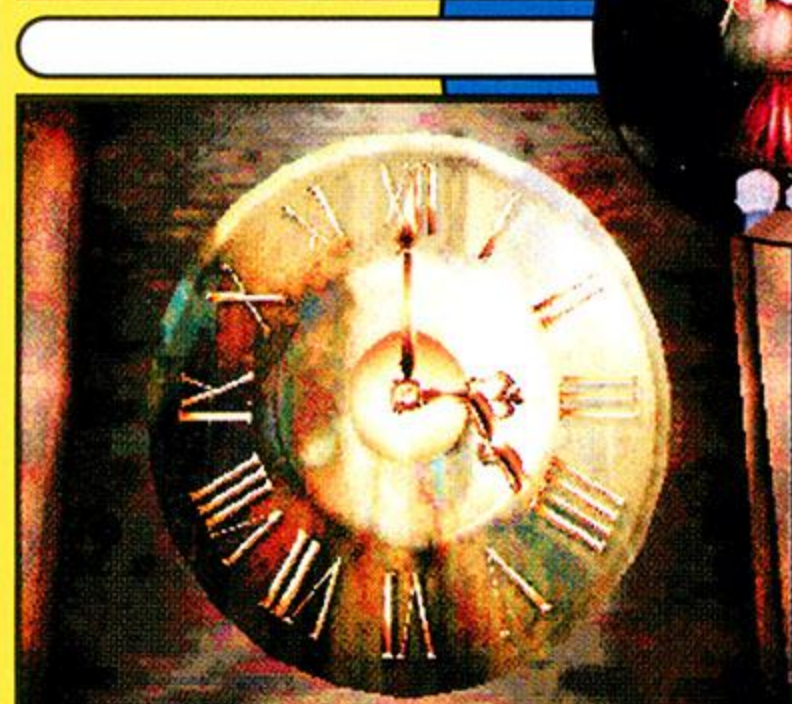
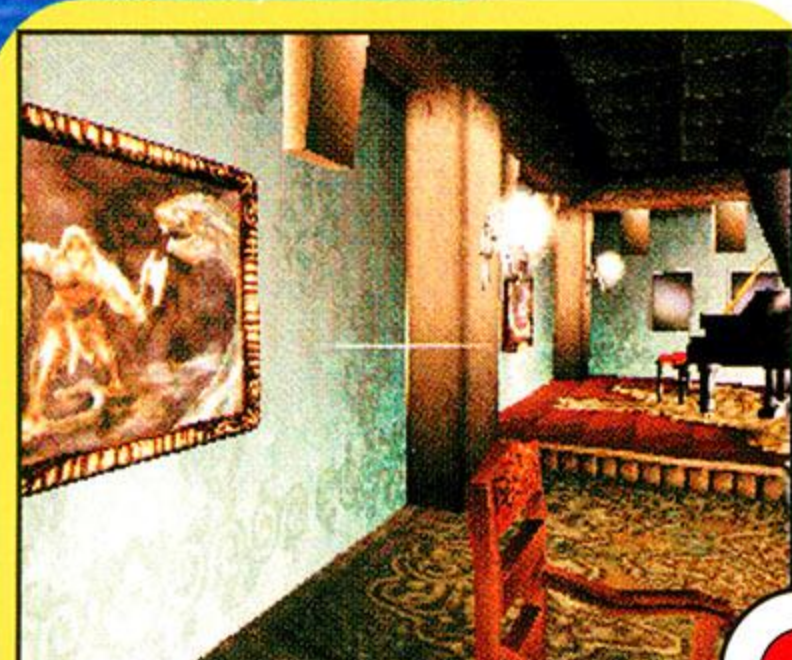
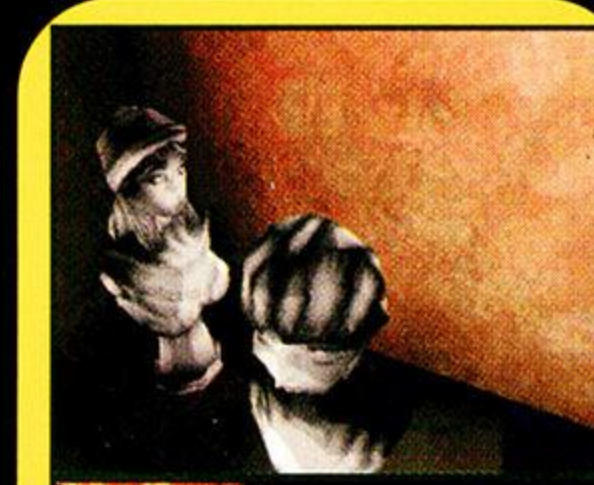
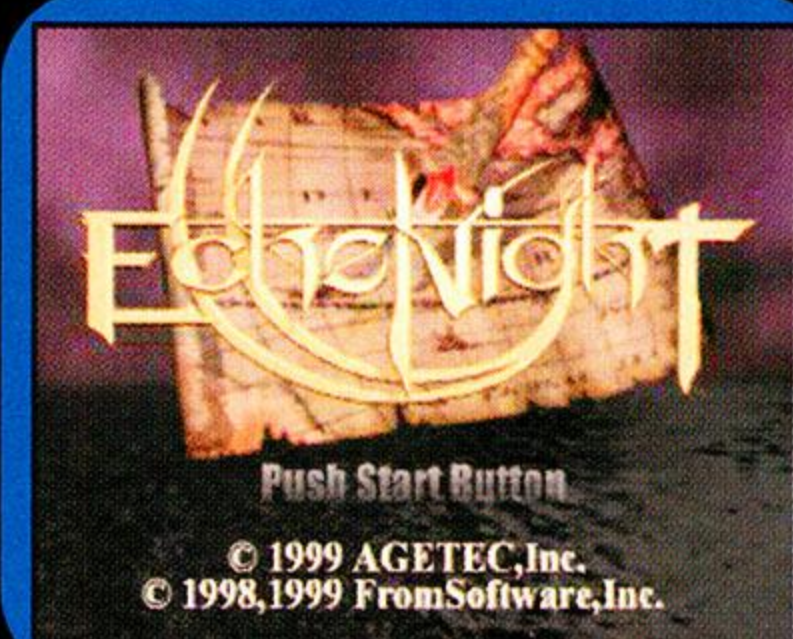
That is why I was surprised to learn that the good folks at Agetec (formerly ASCII Entertainment) were using the old King's Field engine for a new game. My instincts told me that this would be a mistake, but I guess my instincts aren't what they used to be. After becoming entranced by Echo Night during the past few days, I can tell you that the underlying engine is perfectly suited to this type of game.

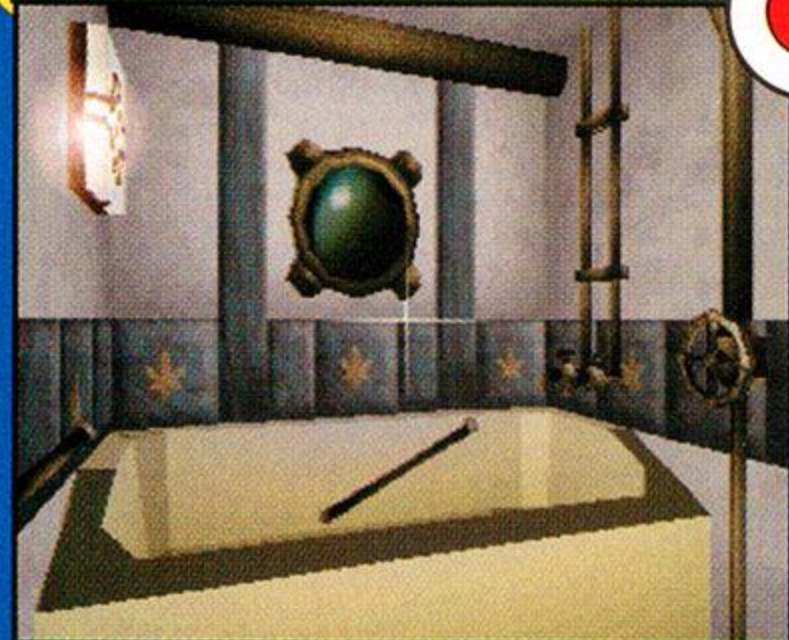
Echo Night can best be described as a three dimensional Myst. Like that game, the player wanders through surreal locales solving simple puzzles and unveiling pieces of a Gothic-influenced storyline to save the world from an evil force. There is no combat, and your only weapon is a chunk of gray matter (before you start looking for tofu, I'm talking about your brain). Unlike Myst, however, Echo Night doesn't involve as much aimless pointing and clicking. Objects can be manipulated and viewed in three dimensions and, since you have to walk around opening doors and picking up items, you become much more immersed in the game.

The story is primarily set on an ocean liner named the Orpheus which disappeared while crossing the Atlantic in 1913 (no, it didn't hit an iceberg). The Orpheus belongs to William Rockwell, a millionaire with one small flaw — he is possessed by a demon and has to make human sacrifices to retain his good fortune. But hey — nobody's perfect! His history is intertwined with that of your father who, as a young boy, nearly died in a confrontation with Rockwell. As the game opens, your father has disappeared and his house has burned down.

As the game progresses, you move from time period to time period, a la Quantum Leap. You end up visiting places such as a church, castle, graveyard, mine, and library. If the designers have left out any scary-looking places that you wouldn't want to visit alone, I can't think of one. In some cases you are there to be a witness to the unfolding story, while in other situations you must solve a puzzle or bring an object back with you.

The game takes place from a first-person viewpoint. Graphically, the game is not exactly "state of the art" but it is definitely a step or two up from King's Field. It is also quite adequate to convey a Victorian-era feel. The colors are subdued, and the furnishings, objects, and room





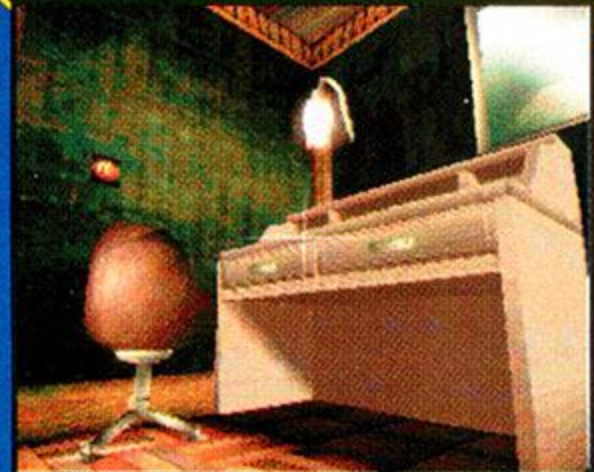
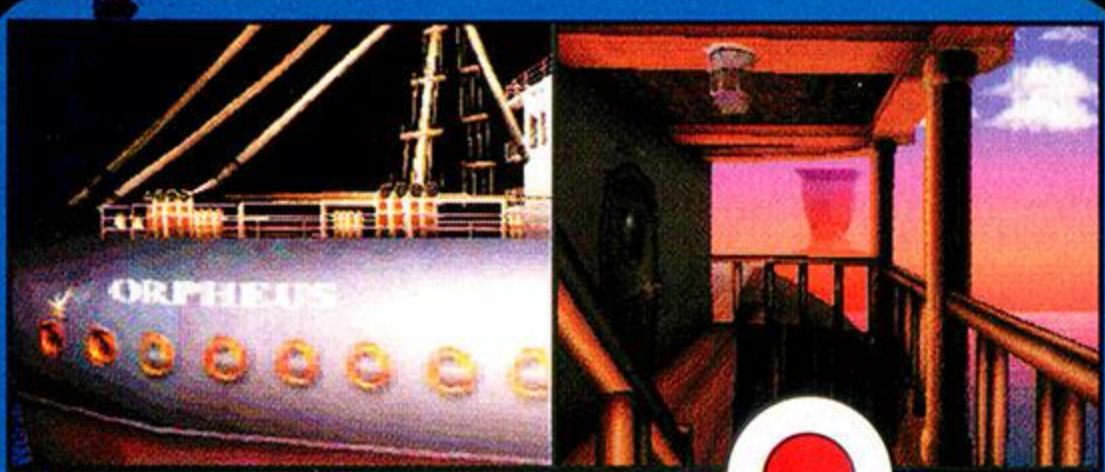
designs reflect the proper time period. The lighting also plays a key role, as many areas are quite dark and foreboding. The apparitions which stalk you will disappear when the lights in an area are turned on. Of course, that is easier said than done — many of the puzzles revolve around figuring how to get the lights working. A haunting musical score accompanies the game and sets the mood perfectly.

Right away you'll realize that the designers don't try and shock you with in-your-face blood and guts, but instead rely upon an eerie

atmosphere to give you the creeps. If being stuck alone in the middle of the ocean on a ship haunted by demons doesn't already get the hair standing up on the back of your neck, there are quite a few goosebump-inducing moments. Play the game at night with the lights off for the best effect.

The voice acting tends to be on the overly-dramatic side, although it isn't the worst I've ever heard. In addition, the majority of the puzzles are pretty simple (although there are a few potential head scratchers later on). Even on the fastest settings for turning and forward movement, you don't seem to be in much of a hurry to get anywhere. If I found myself below decks on a ship of the damned, I wouldn't stop running as fast as I could until I made it to the Leedo deck and found the shuffleboard. Obviously, the game doesn't need to be as fast as Quake because there is no combat involved, but it still seems a little slow for my tastes.

Most unfortunately, the game doesn't take very long to finish. Even though I opened every door, drawer, and toilet lid (don't ask me what I expected to find), I still completed it in about seven hours. Sadly, there are no "extras" unlocked when the game is completed to entice you to play it again. The game's ending is also a bit anti-climactic. I still plan on going through it again to beat my best time and get a higher rating... but I'm a nut.



and still makes the game a recommended purchase.

Some cool touches that I have to mention include an old-time movie and casino games (roulette, slots and blackjack) which you play in middle of the story. Kind of a nice break. Although I've never heard a blackjack dealer tell a customer that they "suck" before, I guess when you are dead you don't have to worry about losing your job. At one point in the game I also stopped and stared out a porthole just to watch the fish swim by.

Each year I happen upon a game which doesn't get much attention but turns out to be a diamond in the rough. Echo Night is just such a game. While it doesn't have the fast-paced shooting action of those other "survival horror" games, it's the perfect next step for the Myst fan who has otherwise never been interested in videogames. I think women will also like the Gothic aspect of it, even though the story is a bit of a downer. Hard-core gamers may find the puzzles too easy and the game too short but, in my opinion, the atmosphere that the designers have created is quite enticing

and still makes the game a recommended purchase.



BOTTOM LINE

If you took Clock Tower, The 7th Guest, and Myst and put them in a blender... you would have a blender full of chopped up CD-Roms. However, if you combined elements of each of these games, you would have a good idea of what Echo Night is all about. If you are a fan of the exploration/puzzle genre who wants a good scare without the need for blowing away zombies, check it out.

COMPATIBILITY



1 Player



Vibration Function Compatible

SCORE:

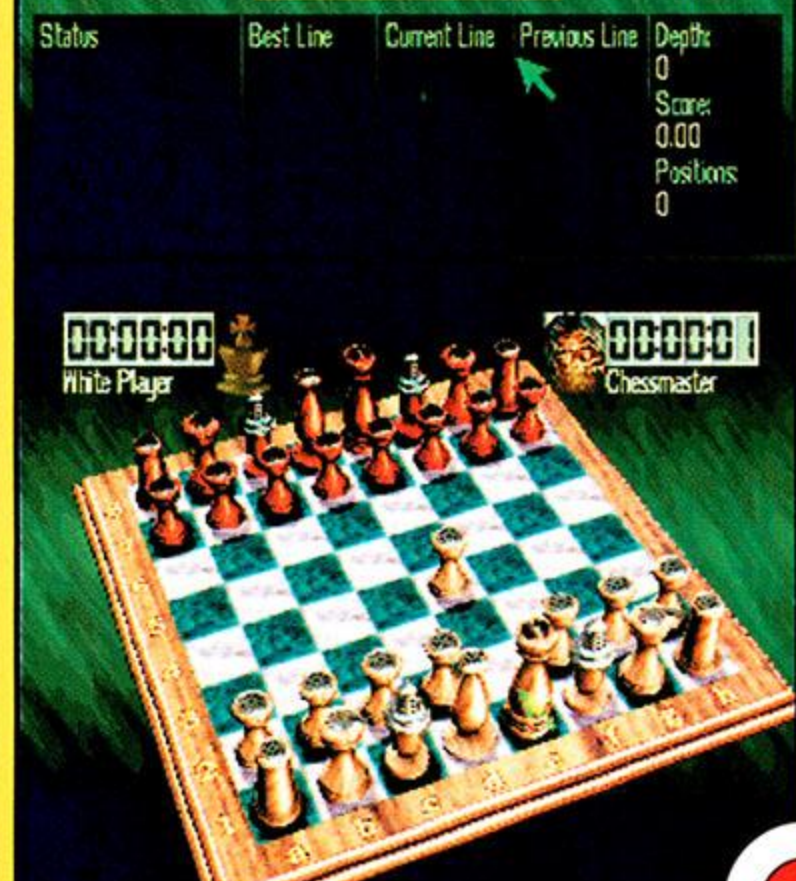
GOLD

X

90%

GENRE:	Chess
PUBLISHED BY:	Mindscape
DEVELOPED BY:	Starsphere
ORIGIN:	US
# OF CD'S:	1
AVAILABLE:	NOW!

CHESSMASTER ii



Did you realize that the game of chess figured prominently in the development of computers? Perhaps this was due to the fact that many of the first programmers and hackers were also chess players (can you say “n-e-r-d-s”?). Perhaps it was because the game itself, which requires knowledge of parameters and the ability to anticipate and react to input, lends itself to the sort of calculations performed by computers. Or, perhaps it was inevitable that one day human beings would accept the challenge of building a machine that was “smart” enough to defeat its creator.

Back in 1965, a critic of the burgeoning artificial intelligence field claimed that no computer program would ever be good enough to defeat a 10 year-old child at chess. Of course, a few MIT programmers responded to this tossed gauntlet by inviting the critic to play against a computer program they had created — and the computer won! This was the start of a human/machine rivalry which recently culminated in IBM’s “Big Blue” defeating Kasparov. Nearly every computer ever created over the years has had at least one chess program available.

Console videogames have not been left out either. Even the lowly 4K Atari 2600 machine had its own Video Chess game — albeit one which was unable to draw the screen while “thinking”, and one which could take up to 10 hours to determine a move on the highest difficulty level. I’m also betting that Dreamcast (should it thrive for more than a year) and Sony and Nintendo’s next systems, will all have chess games in their software libraries as well.

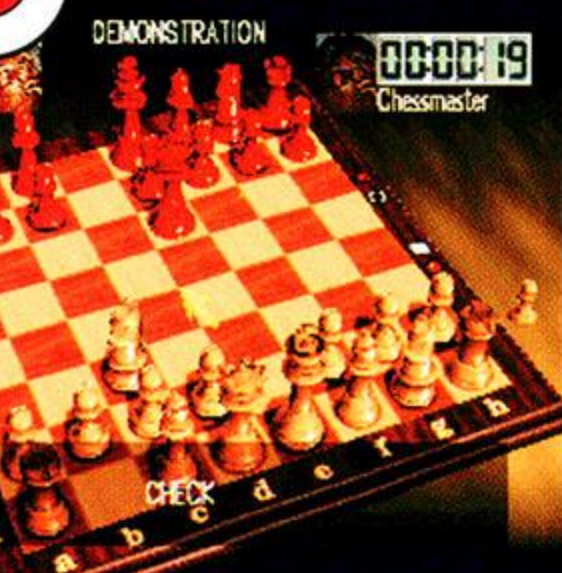
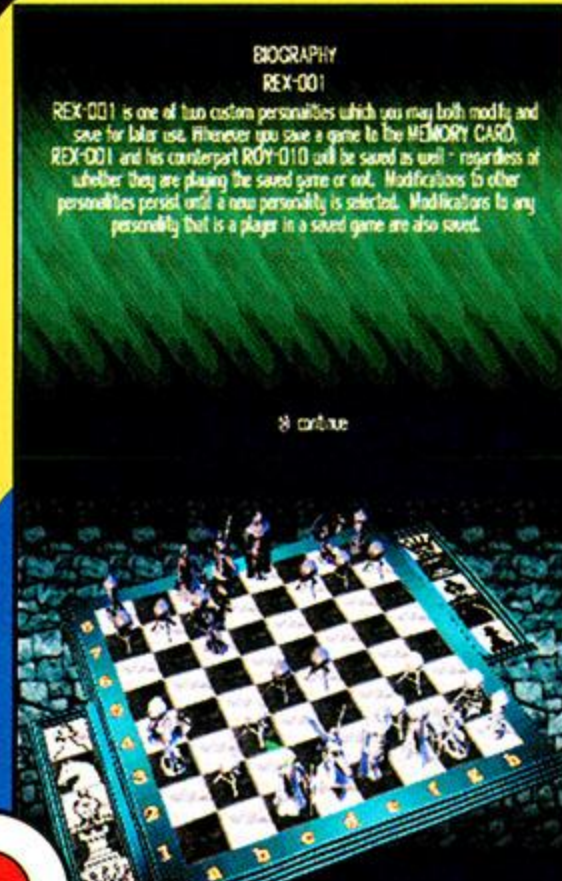
Well now, let’s see a show of hands. How many of you can tell I’m stalling? I apologize for all this history, but the fact is I really don’t have a heck of a lot to say about this game. It is what it is.

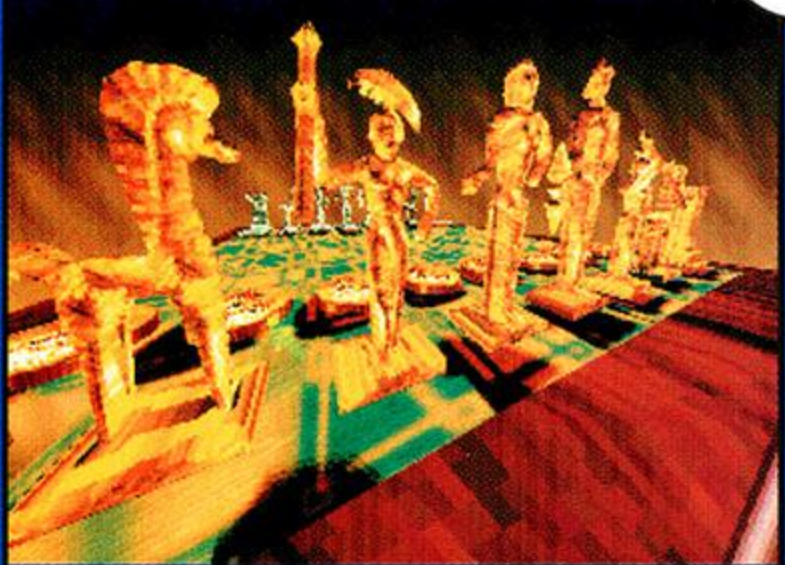
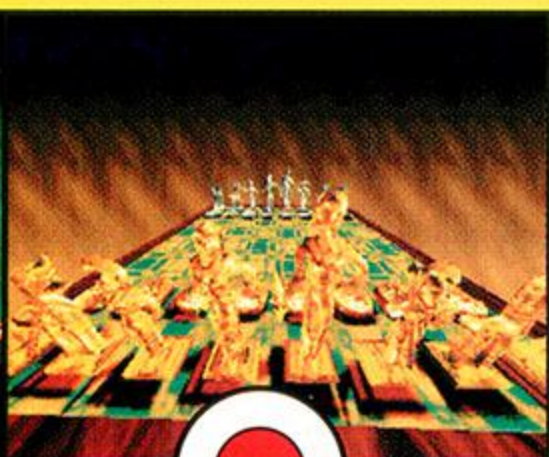
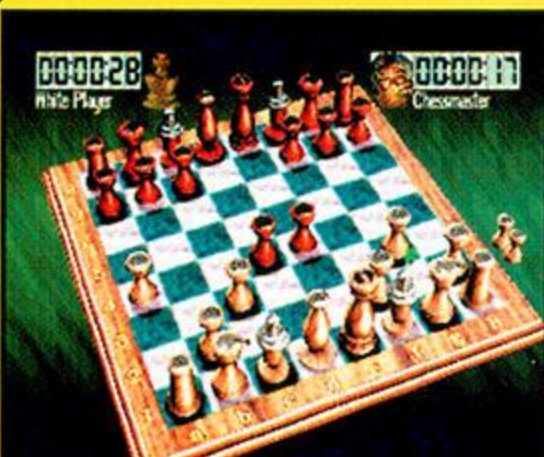
I was going to try to compare it to the other PlayStation chess game on the market — except, it is no longer on the market. I couldn’t find a new or used copy of Chessmaster 3D anywhere! I couldn’t even refer to an old issue of PSExtreme, since it was never reviewed. So, it looks like all I’ve got to talk about are the various features and options of this current version.

You can challenge the computer, or a friend, or you can watch and learn as two computer opponents battle it out themselves. There are 62 fictional characters to play against, each with their own ranking and style of play. If that is not enough, you can also play against 31 historic personalities, such as Bobby Fischer, Boris Spassky, Karpov

CHESSMASTER ii

NOW LOADING
(C) MINDSCAPE, INC.
DEVELOPED BY STARSPIRE INTERACTIVE, INC.





and Kasparov. If you've never heard of any of these guys, you probably ought to stop here and go on to the next review. There are also two custom opponents which you can create and save to the memory card.

As far as the look of the game is concerned, there are 19 different chess sets to choose from, including metal, marble, modern, Chinese, alphabet characters, and Staunton (standard). The board itself can be made to resemble mahogany, marble, teak or other materials, and there are 21 types of squares to choose from. If that isn't

enough, there are also eight different background screens to select. About the only thing missing is an editor to create your own pieces or draw your own wallpaper.

The controls are quite simple, with buttons to select and drop the pieces, take back or replay moves, force the computer to make a move, or give you a hint showing your next best move. Notation can be algebraic, descriptive, or coordinate, among others, and you can set various time parameters for moves and overall games. You can set up scenarios and play them out, and you can receive text advice during a game to explain why a recommended move is your best option.

While there is no tutorial game, Chessmaster II explains all the rules of chess — including en passant, castling, and promotion — by means of video and voiceovers. So if you are a novice who refers to the Knights as "horsies" and the Rooks as "those castle thingies", you can learn the game from square one.

Now, I'm sure I'll get an e-mail from someone telling me that, after he played for 100 hours, he noticed that Emanuel Lasker played too much like Mikhail Botvinnik. Or, he'll question my rating and ask why I didn't drop the score 5% because it didn't allow him to recreate the 1834 match between Alexander McDonnell and Louis Charles de la Bourdonnais. If you are into chess

that much, these are the least of your worries. All I can say, is that depending on the opponents I chose, I was able to win easily, play a close game that could go either way, or get checkmated before the first commercial.

What else can I say? Chessmaster II plays a great game of chess and has enough options to make everyone happy. Is the game perfect? No. For one thing, it could have been mouse or trackball compatible to make movement smoother. I would have liked an option to — you guessed it — listen to my own music CD's instead of the seven available themes. And, while I understand that chess is a serious game for most people, I would have liked the option to have animated pieces battle each other or some other humorous elements to break the tension. Still, none of these missing options detract from the fact that Chessmaster II, as we have come to expect, is the name in computer chess games.

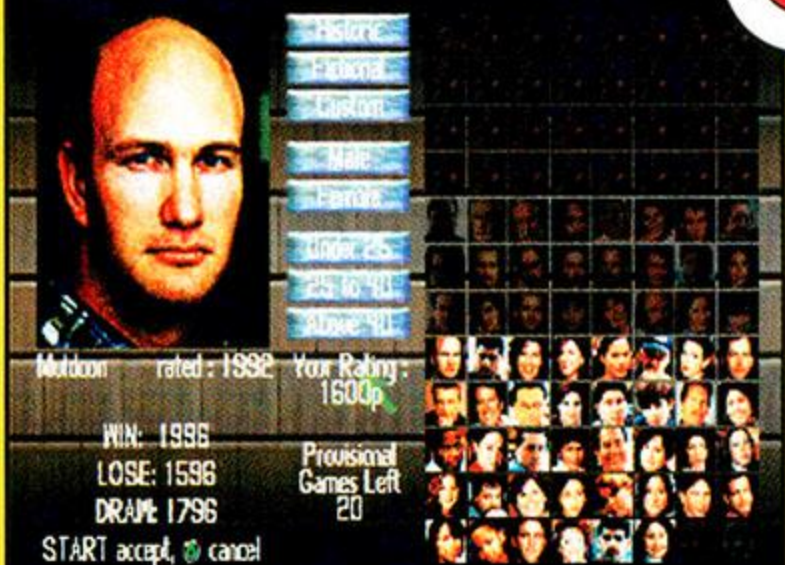
BOTTOM LINE

For those of you looking for a chess game for the PlayStation, and you know who you are, here it is! Whether you want to teach yourself to play the game, sharpen your skills against a worthy adversary, or challenge an opponent who is available 24 hours a day (and who won't threaten to divorce you if you beat them too badly), Chessmaster II has what you are looking for.

COMPATIBILITY

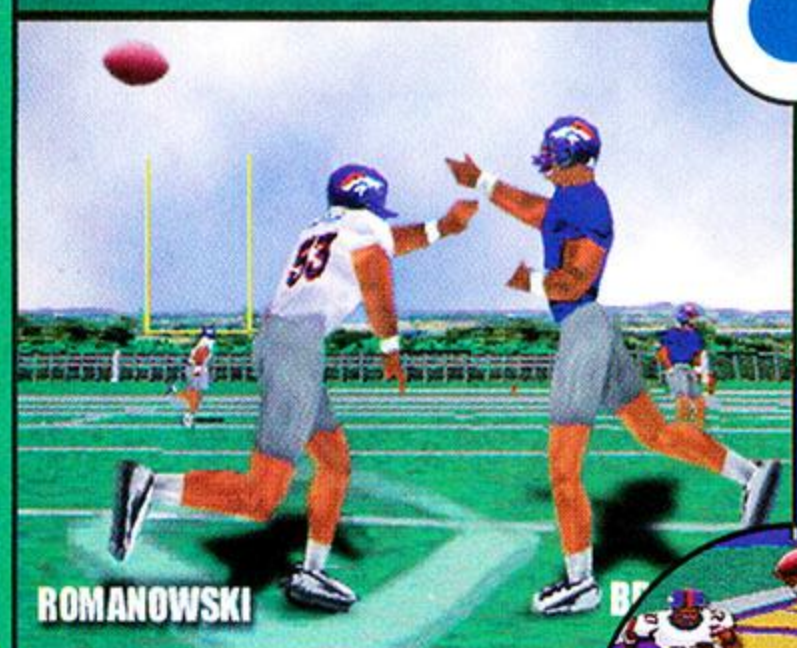
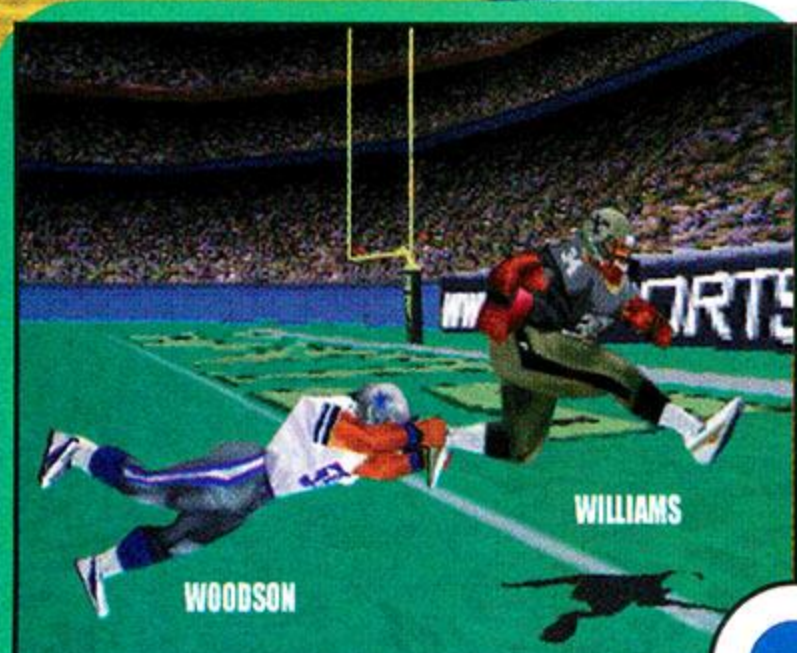


1 or 2 Players

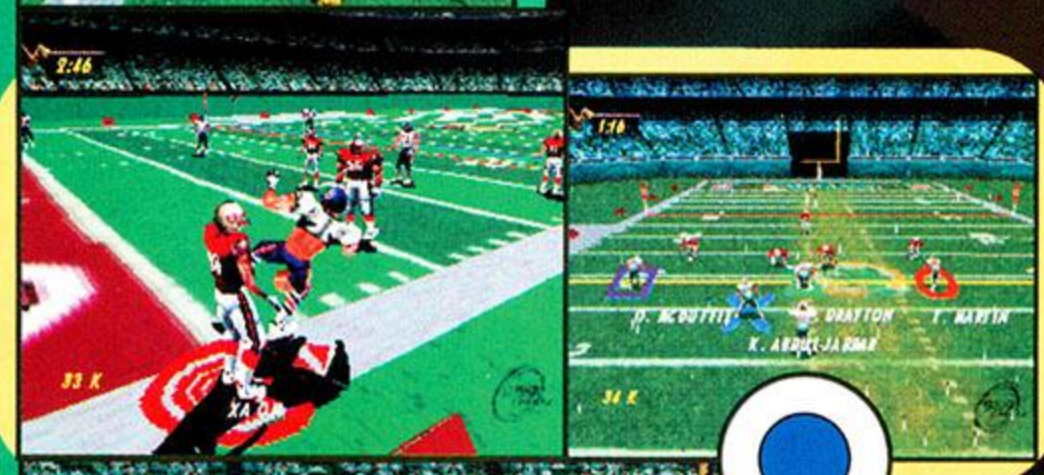
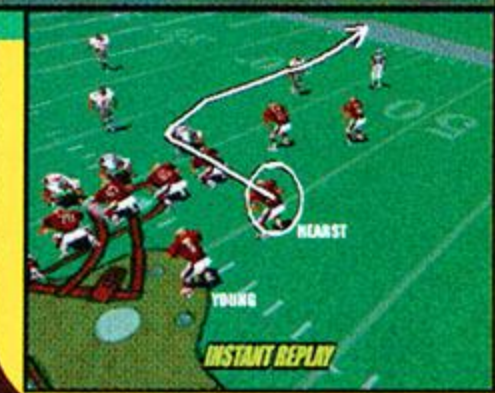
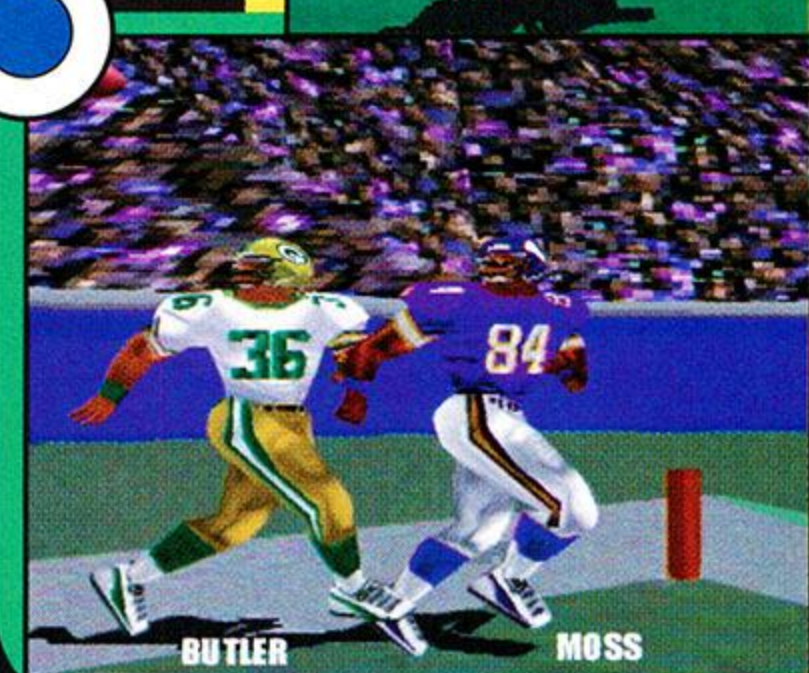
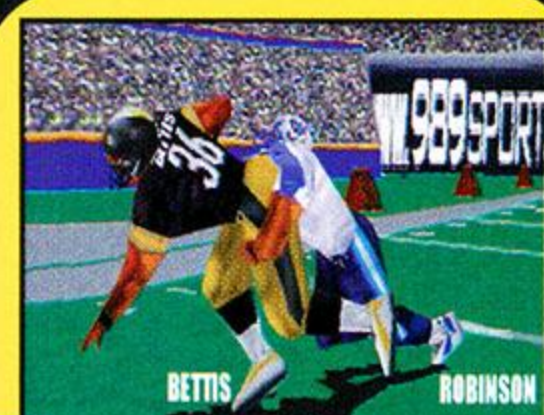


NFL GAMEDAY 2000

GENRE: FOOTBALL
PUBLISHED BY: 989 SPORTS
DEVELOPED BY: REDZONE INTERACTIVE
ORIGIN: USA
OF CD'S: 1
AVAILABLE: SEPTEMBER



NFL GameDay 2000 is coming to a PlayStation near you in a couple of months, and you'll definitely want to be there to check it out! GameDay 99 has been completely revamped to bring gamers a multitude of new features and gameplay options. The player models have been upped from 250 polys each to over 350 apiece, giving the players even more definition. The players sizes have also been tuned to correctly showcase the various player physiques found in the NFL. Some of the new animations that these gridiron goliaths can accomplish include chop blocks, tip-toe sideline catches, upended tackles, drag downs, low & high wrap tackles, and the players will even be able to break tackles with second and third efforts! Other new features include the ability to play as any "Skill Player" (QB, RB, WR, TE) while the CPU handles the rest of the team. As a WR, you can run your own route and have the CPU QB throw the ball to you (as you raise your hand to signal that you're open). Maybe the biggest addition for 2000 is that of the GM Mode. Here you can play as GM, coach, or player over multiple seasons. As GM, you'll control all of the functions, such as signing and trading players, restricted by the salary cap limits. There's also a new practice mode, play editor, and a refined create-a-player mode.



989 Sports is back with the sequel to last year's hard hitting football brawler, NFL Xtreme. In NFL Xtreme 2, players will be able to deliver even bigger hits than before, and they'll hear about it even more! Over 120 different taunts have been put into the game, so odds are good that you'll hear something different just about every time you play. The original arcade style Xtreme featured 100 different player animations - now Xtreme 2 features more than 350. Crazy endzone dances, big tackles and high flying catches are even more over-the-top than they were last year. And, when players take their helmets off to give you some smack, you'll be able to see their real faces plastered on those detailed polygonal bodies. A new mode has been added this year called Unlimited Passing, where it is possible to pass the ball back and forth (behind the line of scrimmage) as many times as you want. You can play in 3, 5, or 7 down mode where there are no first downs, just the number of downs selected to get to the endzone. In this mode, you can actually throw the ball fifty yards up the field, then turn around and throw it backwards another 40 yards! A new Play Selection interface has been added to get you into the game quicker. Now, you only have ten seconds to choose a play, so things are moving 3 times as fast as they were!

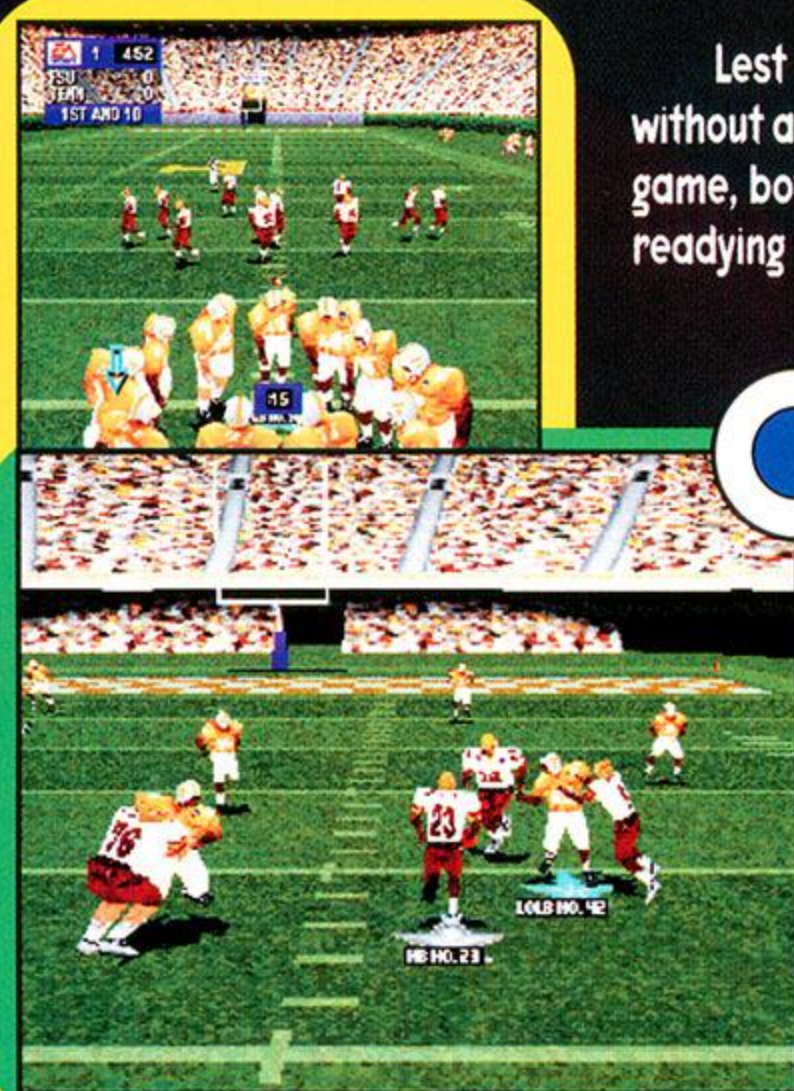


NFL XTREME 2

GENRE: FOOTBALL
PUBLISHED BY: 989 SPORTS
DEVELOPED BY: 989 SPORTS
ORIGIN: USA
OF CD'S: 1
AVAILABLE: JULY

GENRE: FOOTBALL
 PUBLISHED BY: EA SPORTS
 DEVELOPED BY: TIBURON
 ORIGIN: USA
 # OF CD'S: 1
 AVAILABLE: AUGUST

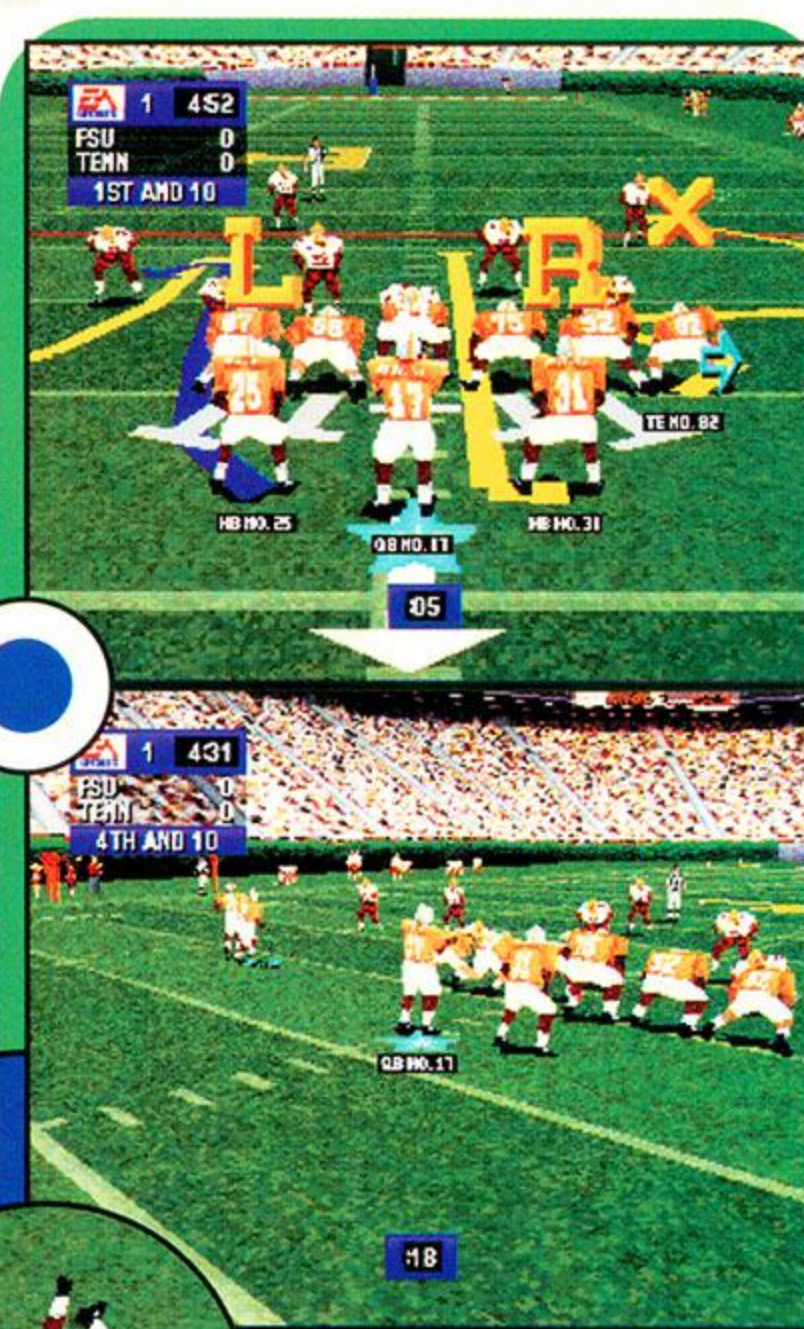
previews **SP**orts **NCAA FOOTBALL** **2000**



Lest another year go by without an updated college football game, both EA Sports and 989 Sports are readying their latest creations for a mid-August release. EA Sports has gone even deeper

into the Dynasty mode this year, allowing gamers to recruit individual players. Would-be coaches can also elect to cut or Red-shirt players that aren't making the grade (figuratively speaking — NEXT year someone will add class attendance to the mix, just you wait and see). Also new for 2000 is the option of creating your own school. You won't have to hire any teachers, you'll only have to worry about choosing school colors, size, and, of course, naming your university! Naturally, if you aren't ready for your own school, then you can always select from the 220 1A & 1AA schools in the game (80 of which are 'classic' match-ups). Some of the 100 new animations include wrap tackles, broken tackles, shoe string catches, and pre & post play animations. NCAA Football 2000 includes 3 conferences that have been previously over-looked; Ivy, MEAC, & SWAC. I'm sure you Columbia types are jumping up and down

right about now (didn't even know you HAD a football program, did you?). There's also a new improved playbook that features over 1,100 offensive and defensive plays, although the "scrum" is not one of them! And, lastly, all 23 Bowl Games (I thought there were at least 40...) are represented in NCAA Football 2000.



NCAA GameBreaker 2000 will open up the new season with the biggest playbook in football video game history — 1800 different plays! The playbook has been enhanced and updated with the help of Bob Toledo, coach of everybody's favorite team, the UCLA Bruins. And, to help spice things up even more, you can go to the create-a-play option and design your own game winning play! Some of the new formations include the Wishbone, Spread, Full House, and the Wing T. On defense, you can now add the 44, 46, 52, and 80 to your list of formations. NCAA GameBreaker 2000 also has a new play calling menu that has huge, easy to read play diagrams. The new Coaching Career Mode allows you to build a national powerhouse by playing through multiple seasons, recruiting players, and participating in bowl games. If one of your star players is graduating (or, more likely, using up his four years of eligibility), then you can save him to a memory card, and upload him to GameDay 2000! New for 2000 animations include gang tackles, stiff arms, stutter steps, spin moves, and wrap tackles. Also, there are new camera angles, a Player of the Game award, new camera cut scenes, and player differential models that show the true distinction between a 180 pound WR and a 280 pound LT. Lastly, Keith Jackson returns to do all new play-by-play.



GENRE: FOOTBALL
 PUBLISHED BY: 989 SPORTS
 DEVELOPED BY: 989 SPORTS
 ORIGIN: USA
 # OF CD'S: 1
 AVAILABLE: AUGUST

NCAA GAMEBREAKER **2000**

ALEXI LALAS INTERNATIONAL SOCCER

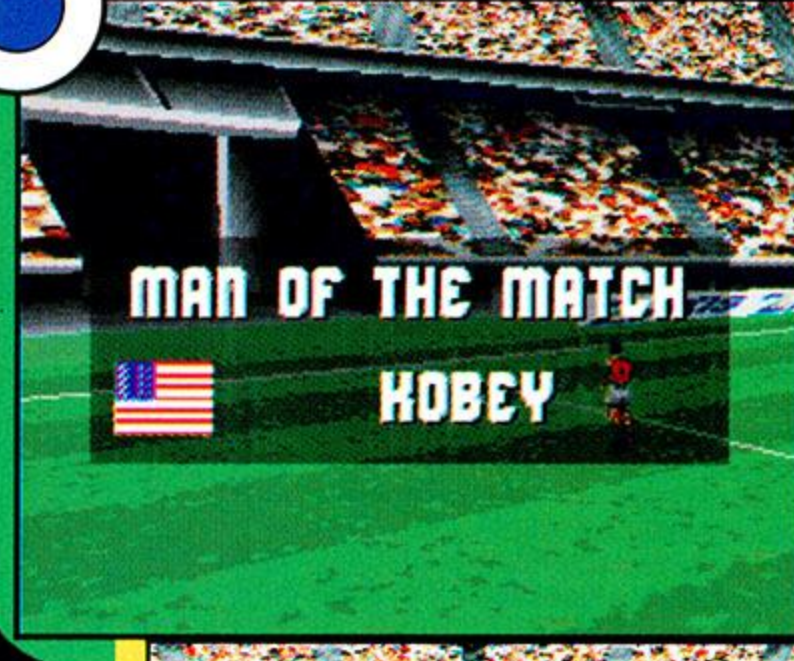
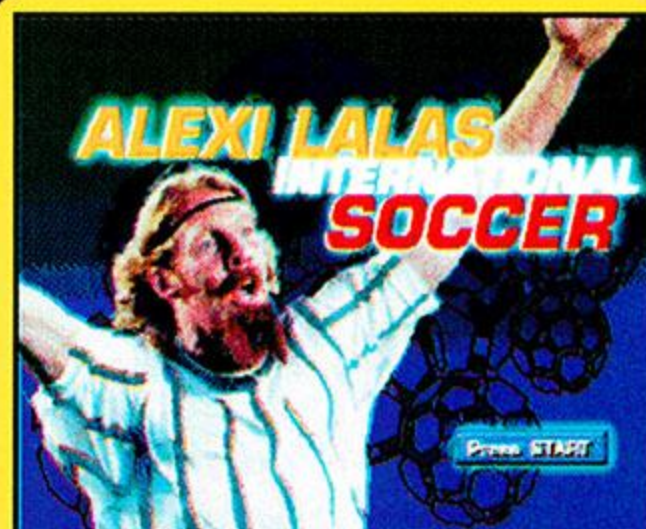


Take 2 Interactive is probably best known for publishing Grand Theft Auto (under their Rockstar Games label) and the action/platformer Monkey Hero. Now, Take 2 delves into the deep and treacherous Sports Gaming Ocean, hoping that Alexi Lalas will be able to swim with the two headed soccer monster franchise from EA Sports (otherwise known as FIFA) and keep his game from sinking to the depths of the ocean like so many before him (Striker 96, Adidas Power Soccer, Fox Sports Soccer, and so on and so on). Well, let's just cut to the chase here and say that Alexi Lalas International Soccer won't be slaying any big fish anytime soon. Ok, enough with the whole water analogy thing already. Sheesh!

Before pointing out the shortcomings of the title, it's always better to start off by mentioning the virtues of the game (that way, you can set it up for a BIG fall, later on — I learned that in Video Game Reviews 101). Let's see, Alexi is in the PlayStation's hi-rez mode, so the grass looks real green (so green, in fact, that you have to add an extra 'e'). Actually, everything in the game looks pretty good from the surface but, once you get a little closer, things aren't as nice as they seem.

For instance, the polygonal players look pretty good running around the pitch (that's euro for field) but, upon closer inspection, they appear blocky and formed of very few polys. probably in the 125-150 range, I'd guess. Compare that number, for example, with the number of 350, or the number of polys that 989 Sports is using for their GameDay 2000 players. Big, BIG difference! Alexi Lalas International Soccer (ALIS, from now on) looks more like the latest soccer game from Konami (ISS 99) than it does from EA Sports. In fact, ALIS plays a lot like ISS 99 as well — but more on that later! Anyway, the uniform colors are all nice and bright, though. So, even if the players are a bit chunky, at least their uniforms stand out!

At its core, ALIS is a pretty straight forward soccer title. There are not a whole lot of options to choose from, and the gameplay features are also kept to a minimum. Basically, you can play a Friendly match (exhibition is the term used outside of the soccer world) or compete in a tournament. That's it! The





manual says that there are over 70 teams to choose from but, when you first start out, you'll only get 53. Apparently, you win extra teams in ALIS by winning the tournament mode. I won the tournament playing as the United States, and was awarded a team called "N American Stars". I can only imagine that, if you play as other teams (England, Germany, etc.), you will be awarded a similar all-star team. Obviously, the Friendly mode is for playing a quick game and then moving on with your game playing life. So, all the nuts & bolts of ALIS would have to be found in the Tournament mode. Sad to say, but this is where the game falls flat on its face. The tournament is a 16 team affair and, in order to qualify, you must first make it through the qualifying rounds. Your team will be placed in a four team pairing (Group A-H) and you'll play the three teams in your group. You get 3 points for a win, 1 for a draw, and donut for a loss. The top two teams from each group move on to the tournament. Well, here's a little math for all you artsy types out there — 3 (the number of qualifying games you play) + 4 (the most games you could play in the tournament) = 7. Yup, seven games and your tournament is over. Shoot, playing 5 minute halves (which is plenty, believe me) will get you done with the whole thing in less time than it takes to watch 1/2 of a REAL soccer match!

Ok, now for the details... there are three difficulty levels, and I found that even the highest difficulty setting wasn't that tough. And, I'm certainly not the greatest soccer video game dude around, either, so those of you that play a ton of soccer games will be able to just blow right through this game. Other options include the half length (2, 5, 10, or 15 minutes), game time (day or night), and offside — on/off. That's it, no more options are currently available, but please check back at a later date and we may have more information for you — thanks for playing! Actually, there are five camera angles to choose from (with "goal cam" being the best) and you can substitute players.

One of the easiest to use features is the ability to set up your strategy on the fly — simply hit the R2 button and you can quickly change from an aggressive style to a more defensive style (or something in the middle).

The player animations are done well and there are quite a few of them. Unfortunately, you won't be able to access all of them. For instance, you cannot manually perform a header, but the computer players can. Likewise, you can't perform a bicycle kick or any other fancy moves (again, the computer CAN). When you compare the list of things you can and can't do in ALIS against a game like FIFA 99, ALIS just doesn't measure up. No special moves, no fakes, no play-by-play announcer, no

tournament statistics (complete) — just a lot of "no's" in ALIS.

BOTTOM LINE

Alexi International Soccer is a decent amount of fun concealed in a small little package.

I'd have to believe that ALIS is intended more as an 'arcade' style soccer game, but that still isn't reason enough to leave out a ton of features and options that soccer fans expect.

Gamers that enjoy playing against a buddy or a sibling will enjoy this game a lot more than solo gamers, as there just isn't enough to keep the Lone Gamer satisfied. However, with so many other soccer titles available, ALIS doesn't do anything to convince you that you need to add this game to your PlayStation library of soccer games.

COMPATIBILITY



FULL TIME	
NETHERLANDS ZERGCAMP (2) S DE DAM	UNITED STATES LALAS ROBEY MCCROOM
3	4
8	7
0	1
1	6
0	0
0	0
61	39
PRESS X	



Take me
out to the

BALL GAME

Part 2

This month PSExtreme finishes off our look back at the PlayStation's library of sports games (in case you missed the July issue, we covered football, baseball, and basketball in that issue).

HOCKEY:

As with baseball, football, and basketball, the hockey category started out with multiple titles from many different companies and soon became a direct contest between Sony and EA.

1996

Sony released the first hockey game for the PlayStation — NHL Face Off. The player movement was fast and fluid, AI was good, and the camera floated free in a 3D environment. As with GameDay, the standard was set pretty high, immediately.

Virgin's first sports title for the PlayStation was NHL Powerplay '96. The high-resolution graphics, good AI, quick gameplay, and great presentation, nevertheless, suffered slightly from the lack of fighting, the single camera angle, and the lack of statistics or trades.

EA entered the fray with NHL '97. As always, presentation was great with a play-by-play announcer and James Brown in the booth. Players were polygonal (a first), but the action couldn't leap pace with the presentation, as players chugged along, passes were too slow and the AI was questionable.

By the end of the year, Sony improved upon its first release with NHL Face Off '97. Puck handling was improved, with the addition of the drop pass, give and go, flip, wrist shot, slap, one timer, fake and redirected shots. The game also featured icon passing fighting between players.

1997

The first and only arcade-style hockey game was Midway's Open Ice. The game was a fine translation of the 2 on 2 arcade hit; but, as with the basketball version, the computer AI was such that no lead was safe.

NHL Powerplay '98 (the year being advanced to follow its competitors) featured nice-looking polygonal players and statistics tracking.



NHL Face Off



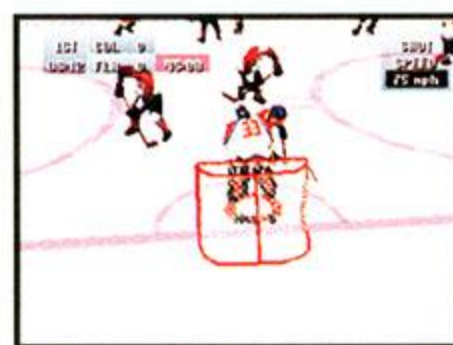
NHL Face Off '98



NHL Powerplay '96



NHL Powerplay '96



NHL '97



NHL Powerplay '98



NHL Breakaway '98



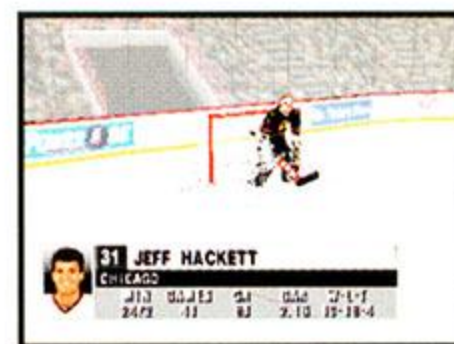
NHL Breakaway '98



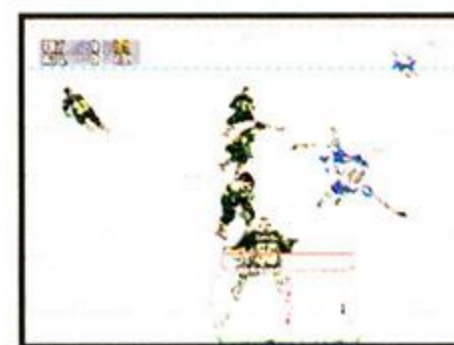
NHL Face Off '98



NHL '98



NHL '98



NHL Face Off '99



NHL Face Off '99

Unfortunately, the frame rate was poor and the control response was slow. Acclaim also entered the rink, with NHL Breakaway '98. While lacking play-by-play, the new passing system was excellent and the polygonal graphics and animation looked great; and, Acclaim tried something new, with a point system that allowed for the hiring of coaches.

Sony and EA went polygonal as well this year. NHL Face Off '98 was the best looking of the bunch, with great camera angles, but a computer opponent who was too unbalanced. NHL '98 dropped the pregame commentary, added fighting, and ended up with a strong looking title, which was cheapened with too much checking.

1998

Sony and EA were left to fight alone this year. NHL Face Off '99 finally got the difficulty level just right, added a new instant replay system and play-by-play from Mike Emrick and Darren Pang, and kept the same fast frame rate and great animations. NHL '99 dropped the crazy checking from last year, but still lacked icon passing and had a slow frame rate and graphics which looked washed out. However, many people still considered NHL 99 the best game out there — but not us!

1999

You can be sure that Face Off and NHL will continue to battle it out later this year. The question is: will there be any other companies willing to take to the ice with them? The answer — yup. Fox Sports will be delivering their hockey title later this year.

SOCCER:

Although soccer (or football as it is known to non-Americans) is supposed to be the most popular sport in the world, in the PlayStation's

library it trails behind all but golf and tennis, in terms of the number of titles. Heck, neither Sony nor 989 has even attempted to publish one, which pretty much leaves EA without any serious competition.

1996

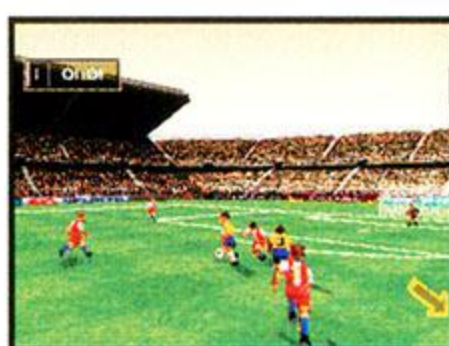
The first PlayStation soccer game was EA's FIFA '96. Although the game featured sprites, not polygons, the wide range of camera angles, commentary by John Motson, 230+ teams, and new moves made this game the standard to beat.

Interplay's VR Soccer '96 featured good commentary by announcer Toby Charles but poor camera angles, difficult player controls for aiming shots, and just 44 teams to choose from. Acclaim's Striker '96 featured even fewer teams — 38 national teams — and played too fast. Players seemed to run randomly around the field and boot the ball back and forth like a hot potato (or Pong, for that matter) with no strategy involved. However, it did feature excellent play-by-play from Groundskeeper Willy.

Olympic Soccer, US Gold's entry, featured polygonal players, lots of viewpoints, and a strong league construction mode, but just 33 teams to choose from. Psygnosis' Adidas Power Soccer, on the other hand, allowed players to choose from 74 teams amongst three European countries (but no national teams). It, too, went with polygonal players and had a perfectly paced gameplay engine, even though the commentary was sparse and repetitive.



FIFA '96



FIFA '96



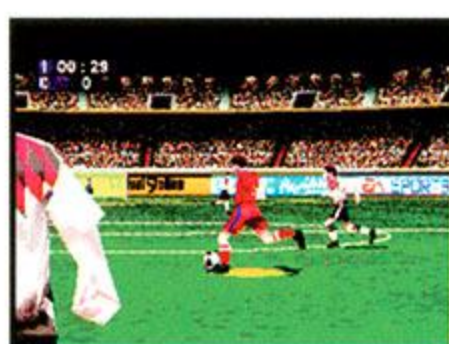
VR Soccer '96



VR Soccer '96

1997

EA's FIFA '97 stumbled, with poor gameplay speed, sluggish control and some bad ball physics. On the plus side, the game added a 5 on 5 indoor soccer mode and commentary from Andy Gray, along with John Motson. Its only competition this year, Konami's Goal Storm '97, couldn't close the gap. Although the game had better visuals, it lacked an official license and the narration was grating.



FIFA '97

1998

FIFA 98: Road to the World Cup helped EA return to form. A penalty shootout mode was added, as was excellent analog support, more stadiums and a Road to the World Cup mode, allowing players to take one of 360 teams from the first stages of qualification to the World Cup in France. The indoor soccer mode returned, but the graphic detail dropped a notch, with a loss of frame rate, when an abundance of players crowded the screen.

Fox entered the soccer market by publishing a game from the designers of VR Soccer (Gremlin). Although the game looked pretty good, the control was terrible; even with analog support, there was a lag time between button press and the action on screen, and the announcer was

horrible.

Psygnosis' Adidas Power Soccer sequel featured 400 different teams and 34 stadiums, this time around, as well as play-by-play in multiple languages. Unfortunately, the game looked like a first-generation title and featured too many Adidas-related commercials. Konami dropped the Goal Storm name but, instead, released ISS Soccer Pro '98. It, too, featured play-by-play in multiple languages, but with stronger graphics and very difficult computer AI.



World Cup '98



World Cup '98



FIFA '99



FIFA '99

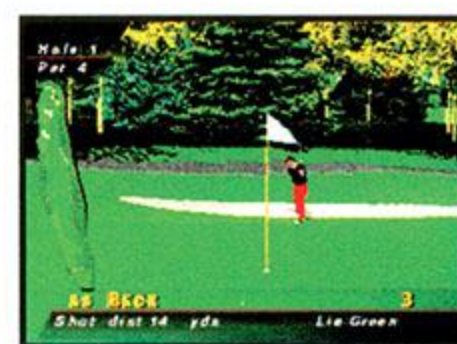
Although it had already released its FIFA title this year, EA meant to capitalize on the license with World Cup '98. The game featured just 40 national teams and 10 stadiums and a special World Cup Classic — once you won the World Cup, you could replay one of the 8 greatest World Cup final games in history. Otherwise, the game had the same features as FIFA '98, good speed, and play-by-play from Desmond Lyman, John Motson, Chris Waddle, and Gary Lineker. Most notably, however, is the fact that the game contains the best intro EVER for a sports video game!

Wait — there's more! EA released its THIRD soccer game of the year — FIFA 99. We were so overwhelmed by the number of times EA could say FIFA in one year that we didn't have a chance to review it. However, going out on a limb, we'll say that it probably plays and looks a lot like World Cup, but is really only intended for the European market (all the teams are Euro's); maybe that wasn't such a long limb!

1999

Although soccer titles fail to gain the same market share that baseball, football, and basketball games do, you can be sure that there will be at least one new title released this year — most likely a FIFA game (actually, FIFA 2000 is scheduled to come out later this year). But where's Sony?

GOLF:



PGA Tour '96



PGA Tour '98

1995

EA Sport's first PlayStation offering was also the system's first golf game. PGA Tour '96 featured two courses, nineteen PGA Tour pros, and a variety of play modes, but a difficult putting game.

1996

Interplay's VR Golf '96 lacked a PGA license, and featured only two fictional courses; but, the gameplay was quick and the environments were fully three dimensional. Peter Allis and Pat O'Brien provided the commentary.

Final Round Golf, from Konami, had primitive polygonal graphics. The interface offered very little control over the game, resulting in a strictly arcade-style contest. Tecmo's, Tecmo World Golf, didn't fare much better. The hitting mechanics were unnecessarily complex, and the low polygon count and primitive sound didn't help.

1997

EA's PGA Tour '98 was the sole golf game released this year, with the same swing meter and putting assistance that the series was known for. Four new courses and commentary by Ernie Johnson Jr. made the game good, but it was still strictly 2D. In a marketing coup, EA decided to add goofy graphics and metal music. Bad ideas, both.

1998

One of the most popular games in Japan came to the US in the form of Sony's Hot Shots Golf. The game was a quick-playing arcade-style golf contest, with players and courses that had to be earned. Hot Shots Golf also featured a limited miniature golf mode and a tutorial system. It's worth noting that Hot Shots Golf was voted PSExtreme's Sports Game of the Year for 1998.

The developers behind VR Golf returned (courtesy of a new publisher) with Fox Sports Golf '99. This time there were six courses to choose from and commentary by Peter Allis and John Walls. Late tallies are that the game sold five copies, so hold on to it, it may be worth something many years from now! EA also returned with their PGA Tour series — this time having obtained the license to use Tiger Woods' name. The game still relied upon digitized players instead of polygons, suffered from a slow frame rate, and still had a frustrating putting element. It had to be recalled, when a controversial South Park video was found embedded on the disk, even though this video could only be viewed on a PC.

1999

Psygnosis entered the golfing area, but perhaps they shouldn't have. Pro 18 World Tour Golf did have commentary by Peter Allis, but it lacked interesting playable characters, had frustrating putting, and changed the standard three button press meter for no good reason.

TENNIS:

1995

Ocean's Power Serve Tennis arrived first, and fea-

tured polygonal characters, nice animation, and true 3D courts to boot. Unfortunately, the level of difficulty was unreasonably high.

1996

Acclaim's V Tennis featured six geographical locations, a variety of surfaces, sixteen players, ten camera angles, smooth animation and flawless control.

1997

Ubisoft's Tennis Arena allowed you to play as one of eight different characters — each with his or her own special shot and varying attributes. The world tour mode featured competition on courts of varying surfaces all over the world. The computer AI was overly frustrating (often making spectacular last-minute comebacks).

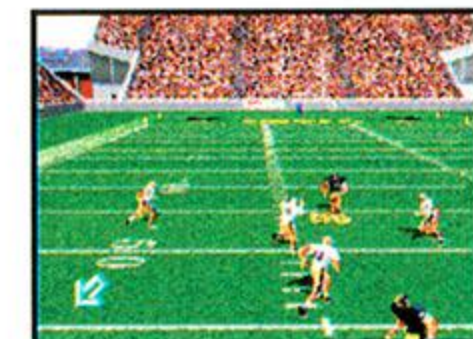
COLLEGE SPORTS:

1996

The first game in this category was a collegiate version of NBA Jam — Acclaim's College Slam. Other than 44 college hoops teams to choose from, the game offered nothing new.



NCAA Gamebreaker



NCAA Football 98



NCAA Football 98



NCAA Football 99



NCAA Football 99

Sony used its NFL GameDay engine as the basis for NCAA GameBreaker. The game featured all 110 Division 1A teams, some of the best 2A schools, college fight songs, bowl games, and unique college formations such as the wishbone. As with their NFL game, GameBreaker featured very fast gameplay and excellent AI.

1997

Mindscape's NCAA Final Four has the dubious honor of being one of the worst basketball simulations ever — college or professional. Poor sound, poor motion-capture animation, and shots and plays without rhyme or reason make this a game to avoid.

EA's NCAA Football '98 looked nice and offered the option to create players and recruit new ones. Non-conference games were against the same opponents every season, for some reason, and the AI was flawed, such that the computer cheated on toughest difficulty level.

1998

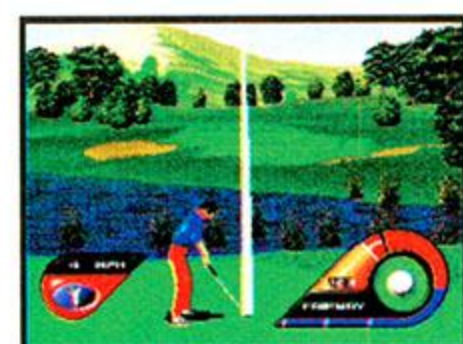
Sony's NCAA GameBreaker '98 made the move to polygonal players, featured all 112 NCAA Division 1A schools, with statistics tracking that allowed players to move teams toward bowl bids and players towards 7 offensive and defensive player awards. The game also did a pretty good job of recreating the college football atmosphere with fight songs and the like.



Hot Shots Golf



Hot Shots Golf



Fox Sports Golf 99



Fox Sports Golf 99



Pro 18

EA's college hoops game, NCAA March Madness '98, provided for Division IAA schools as well as a handful of women's teams. Blocking shots was difficult, however, and although opponents were challenging, there were not enough stats or fancy moves. EA's college gridiron game, NCAA Football '99, went polygonal with a new optional passing and kicking system. Unfortunately, the quarterbacks weren't as accurate, resulting in an emphasis on the running game. The computer also still cheated — resulting in more penalties being called in 4th quarter when you were winning.

1999

NCAA Gamebreaker '99 was essentially GameDay with fight songs, college rules, and pom poms. The game also added analog control which was missing in the NFL version.

EA's NCAA March Madness '99 failed to impress, with its difficult camera angles, goofy animations, poor shooting percentages, and washed-out graphics. The better college hoops contest was Sony's NCAA Final Four '99. It looked clean, featured all Division 1 and most Division 2 teams (except UC Davis, last year's champ), and had play-by-play from Quinn Buckner. The game also added a shot meter with a "hot spot" for better odds at making the shot.



NCAA Final Four '99



NCAA Final Four '99

OLYMPIC SPORTS:

1996

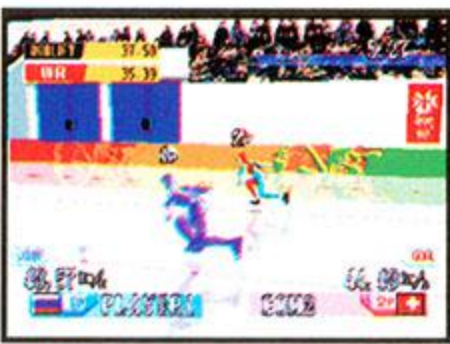
Konami, who released the original button-mashing Track and Field Olympic Summer Games arcade game in the early 1980's, brought International Track and Field to the PlayStation. As with the original coin-op, the game involved a tremendous amount of button manipulation. IT&F featured 11 traditional events, but no diving, and had 12 countries to choose from, as well as qualifying rounds and fluid animation throughout. Still a great game, and one to buy if you find it in the used bins.

Eidos challenged Konami with its own Olympic Summer Games, another button-mashing contest. This time the gameplay was too slow, the sound bites were repetitive, and the polygonal athletes were under detailed.



1998

Konami returned with Nagano Winter Olympics. The game featured 13 Olympic events in their actual Japanese locales and was set up much like IT&F. Another button-mashing contest, it shined as a multi-player affair, but had a puzzling choice of contests, such as curling and too many speed skating events.



Nagano Winter Olympics

INDOOR SPORTS:

1997

The first bowling and pool games arrived nearly simul-



Virtual Pool

Virtual Pool, to the PlayStation with a variety of games, but slightly dated graphics.



Brunswick Pro Circuit



Pool Hustler

a younger audience.

ASCII's Backstreet Billiards and Activision's Pool Hustler had much better graphics than their predecessor, as well as storylines for added interest. Backstreet had more game variations and colorful environments, but Pool Hustler allowed for gambling and analog support.

1999

Polygonal opponents finally appeared, courtesy of THQ's Ultimate 8 Ball — a game with a high level of difficulty and many opponents, tables, and locales that must be "unlocked."

THE POST GAME SHOW

Despite being almost the oldest video game genre, sports games show no sign of aging. But, why should they? Year after year we continue to watch professional sporting events and, with a few exceptions, most of the sports' leagues continue to thrive. Technological advances have resulted in video games being able to closely approximate the look and feel of their real world counterparts. At the same time, there is still a parallel interest in simplified "arcade style" or extreme versions of sports.

If you are interested in seeing the improvement of software during a system's lifetime, the sports' genre is the best place to notice the differences. Since the basic rules of the games don't really change, each year brings attempts to improve the graphics, the AI, and the interface. Every now and then, a publisher will try to add something novel — if it works, it is quickly copied by competitors. If it doesn't, it becomes a soon-forgotten novelty.

Even if video game technology comes to a complete standstill, real-life players will retire and be drafted, expansion teams will pop up and existing teams will move, and team uniforms, logos and names will continue to change. That alone will ensure that sports video games will continue to thrive. As long as baseball, basketball, football, and other competitive sports continue to enjoy popularity, in real life, you can bet that the desire to play them on home video game systems will never be quenched.

The EXCAVATE section is where we dig up 12 months worth of ratings and present them on one easy-to-read spread, along with a little explanation/breakdown of our rating system. Use this as your buying guide throughout the year and as a reference for those older games that you might have missed (or wish you had).

PLATINUM GAMES	ISSUE	SCORE			
Syphon Filter	March 1999	99%	Knockout Kings	January 1999	92%
Ape Escape	July 1999	98%	Lunar: Silver Star Story Complete	July 1999	92%
Crash Bandicoot 3: Warped	December 1998	98%	NCAA Final Four 99	March 1999	92%
Medievil	November 1998	98%	Parasite Eve	September 1998	92%
Metal Gear Solid	December 1998	98%	Point Blank 2	April 1999	92%
NFL Blitz	October 1998	98%	Streak	December 1998	92%
NFL GameDay 99	October 1998	98%	Tai Fu	April 1999	92%
Spyro the Dragon	October 1998	98%	Warzone 2100	July 1999	92%
Street Fighter Alpha 3	June 1999	98%	WWF War Zone	September 1998	92%
Tomb Raider III	January 1999	98%	Assault Retribution	December 1998	91%
GOLD GAMES	ISSUE	SCORE			
Croc 2	July 1999	97%	Baseball 2000	June 1999	91%
Test Drive 5	December 1998	97%	Rollcage	April 1999	91%
Bloody Roar 2	May 1999	96%	Test Drive: Off Road 2	December 1998	91%
Bust-A-Groove	January 1999	96%	Wild 9	December 1998	91%
Civilization II	March 1999	96%	Bushido Blade 2	November 1998	90%
Colony Wars: Vengeance	December 1998	96%	Bust-A-Move 4	January 1999	90%
Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko	May 1999	96%	Darkstalkers 3	January 1999	90%
A Bugs Life	December 1998	95%	Freestyle Boardin' '99	March 1999	90%
Akuji: The Heartless	February 1999	95%	G Darius	October 1998	90%
Duke Nukem: Time to Kill	December 1998	95%	Guardian's Crusade	April 1999	90%
Kagero: Deception II	December 1998	95%	Heart of Darkness	September 1998	90%
NCAA GameBreaker 99	January 1999	95%	Kula World	September 1998	90%
NHL Face-off 99	December 1998	95%	Moto Racer 2	November 1998	90%
Rogue Trip	November 1998	95%	Ridge Racer Type 4	April 1999	90%
Star Ocean: Second Story	June 1999	95%	Rug Rats	January 1999	90%
Abe's Exoddus	February 1999	94%	Silent Hill	March 1999	90%
Fighter Maker	June 1999	94%	The Fifth Element	December 1998	90%
Legend of Legaia	April 1999	94%	The Next Tetris	May 1999	90%
NBA Live 99	January 1999	94%	The Unholy War	November 1998	90%
Need for Speed: High Stakes	May 1999	94%	Tiny Tank	February 1999	90%
NFL Xtreme	August 1998	94%	SILVER GAMES	ISSUE	SCORE
Rally Cross 2	January 1999	94%	Army Men 3D	May 1999	89%
Ehrgeiz	May 1999	93%	Tenchu	November 1998	89%
Guilty Gear	December 1998	93%	Trap Gunner	October 1998	89%
MLB 2000	June 1999	93%	Turbo Prop Racing	August 1998	89%
Rival Schools	November 1998	93%	Brigandine	January 1999	88%
Brunswick Pro Circuit Bowling	November 1998	92%	C: The Contra Adventure	September 1998	88%
Cool Boarders 3	November 1998	92%	Contender	February 1999	88%
			WCW/NWO Thunder	February 1999	88%
			Backstreet Billiards	December 1998	87%

Castrol Honda Superbike Racing	July 1999	87%	Touring Car Championship	September 1998	81%
Kartia	August 1998	87%	All Star Tennis '99	June 1999	80%
Madden NFL 99	October 1998	87%	Blast Radius	February 1999	80%
Mr. Domino	February 1999	87%	Irritating Stick	February 1999	80%
Rush Down	April 1999	87%	Pocket Fighter	August 1998	80%
Team Losi RC Racer	October 1998	87%	Shadow Madness	May 1999	80%
Uprising X	February 1999	87%	BRONZE GAMES	ISSUE	SCORE
Inter'l Superstar Soccer Pro 98	August 1998	86%	Animaniacs: Ten Pin Alley	January 1999	79%
NCAA Football 99	September 1998	86%	Batman and Robin	October 1998	79%
NHL 99	December 1998	86%	Centipede	July 1999	79%
Ultimate 8 Ball	July 1999	86%	R-Types	March 1999	79%
Asteroids	January 1999	85%	Spice World	October 1998	79%
Command & Conquer: Retaliation	October 1998	85%	Street Sk8er	April 1999	79%
Destrega	February 1999	85%	WarGames	September 1998	79%
Elemental Gearbolt	August 1998	85%	Nectaris: Military Madness	February 1999	78%
Monaco Grand Prix	May 1999	85%	Dead in the Water	February 1999	76%
Motorhead	November 1998	85%	Monkey Hero	March 1999	76%
Pool Hustler	December 1998	85%	Sentinel Returns	August 1998	76%
Thunder Force V	October 1998	85%	Bottom of the 9th 99	September 1998	75%
Fisherman's Bait	April 1999	84%	High Heat Baseball 2000	July 1999	75%
Populous: The Beginning	June 1999	84%	Master of Monsters: Disciples of G	November 1998	75%
Resident Evil and RE 2: Dual Shock	October 1998	84%	Psybadek	February 1999	75%
S.C.A.R.S.	November 1998	84%	Street Fighter Collection 2	October 1998	75%
Triple Play 2000	May 1999	84%	Bomberman Fantasy Race	May 1999	74%
Armored Core: Project Phantasma	January 1999	83%	Crime Killer	September 1998	74%
Dragonseeds	December 1998	83%	Small Soldiers	December 1998	74%
Grand Theft Auto: London, 1969	June 1999	83%	Sports Car GT	June 1999	74%
NASCAR 99	November 1998	83%	3Xtreme	June 1999	73%
Rampage 2: Universal Tour	May 1999	83%	Bomberman World	November 1998	72%
Xenogears	December 1998	83%	In the Zone 99	May 1999	72%
Activision Classics	November 1998	82%	Super Cross 98	August 1998	71%
Formula 1 98	January 1999	82%	Big Air	May 1999	70%
Future Cop: L.A.P.D.	October 1998	82%	Bust-a-Move '99	April 1999	70%
Grand Theft Auto	August 1998	82%	NCAA March Madness 99	February 1999	70%
Mortal Kombat 4	August 1998	82%	O.D.T.	December 1998	70%
Ninja: Shadow of Darkness	November 1998	82%	TIN GAMES	ISSUE	SCORE
Running Wild	December 1998	82%	Tales of Destiny	November 1998	69%
Twisted Metal 3	January 1999	82%	Adidas Power Soccer 98	August 1998	68%
Brave Fencer: Musashi	December 1998	81%	Pro 18 World Tour Golf	April 1999	68%
Devil Dice	October 1998	81%	Apocalypse	January 1999	49%
K1 Revenge	March 1999	81%	Circuit Breakers	August 1998	49%
Tiger Woods PGA Tour 99	January 1999	81%			

what do all those numbers mean?



98-100%
The ultimate gaming experience.



90-97%
"Must buy" games; each carries our editor's seal of approval and are recommended for fans of that genre.



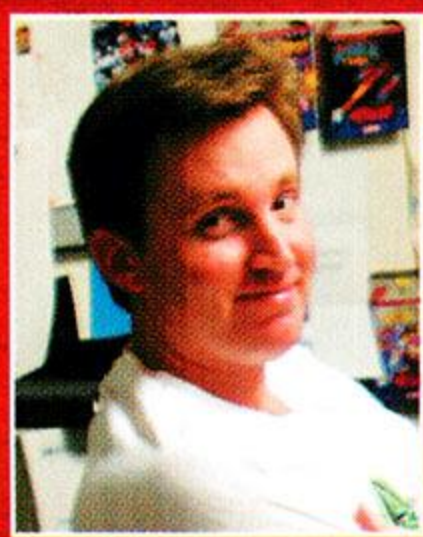
80-89%
Good games, but lacking in some area; only for fans of that style of game.



70-79%
Mediocre titles that suffer from some serious flaws. Rent - don't buy.



0-69%
Tin games are to be avoided at all costs. Only die-hard gamers would buy these.



David Jon Winding
Publisher

"WE WANTED TO MAKE A GAME LIKE TOMB RAIDER..."

I was just reading Eric's review of Alexi Lalas Soccer and was struck by the economic plight that I feel must afflict many of the "me-too" software publishers in our industry. You know the companies and you know the products; the third football game in a two team battle, the fourth soccer game in a market where only one will sell a decent number, the action/platform title that comes from Europe (where it didn't sell particularly well) and, after a name change and some transparent "polishing", lays a major egg with retailers across the country. What gives? One company has a hit with something new or improved, then the floodgates open up and the horde of "just-like-but-different(s)" come oozing into retail.

Here's a list of titles for you: Jimmy Johnson Football, Fox Sports College Hoops, Auto Destruct, the Hardball series, Pro 18 World Tour Golf, Bomberman Fantasy Race, ANY billiards game... and the list goes on — how many of them have YOU played? The funny thing is that I actually believe that most of the decision makers at the companies responsible for these games (some good, some decent, some a waste of time) know they are in trouble before they release them... how could they not know?

Let's pretend that we are in charge of product development at the M2 (Me-Too) software publishing company. One of your producers wants to do a baseball game on the PlayStation. Do you green light the project? Sure, if you are Sony/989 Studios or EA Sports. If you're not (and M2 certainly isn't in their class), you'd have to be certifiable. Unless you're lucky, your development team probably doesn't have near the talent, in either quality or quantity. You have, at best, 10% of the marketing budget, and no real strength in the retail community. The buyers at Babbage's, EB, Wal-Mart, Toys 'R' Us, Best Buy, etc. know that they are only going to sell two baseball games, and that's all they want to carry on their shelves. And, soccer? Forget it! Just ship that baby to Europe and don't bother us with it. It's a battle that you have no hope of winning and the scraps aren't worth fighting over. Sadly, I believe that the games listed above, and many, many more like them, were put on the market to scarf the scraps and (hopefully) break even, or at least not lose too much — in the hope of having that oddball hit and gaining a little cache within the retail community.

Up until last year, Accolade spent many a sports season buried deep in the shadows of bigger competitors. You name the sport and they had the third option on a list of two (they were kind of the write-in candidate). And these guys had a little money behind them. They got all of the licenses; Hardball (MLB and MLBPA), Unnecessary Roughness (NFL) and the Jack Nicklaus golf franchise, and spent some decent money marketing the products. In the case of the Nicklaus series, they had what critics maintain is the best golf simulation ever created, and the Hardball series has always garnered critical praise.

Accolade is no longer in the sports business. It took them awhile, but they eventually discovered that the road to success was going to be paved by the creation of new franchises, and the exploitation of those where they were already the number one or two player (Test Drive). Just ask Activision; they purchased the rights to the Nicklaus games from Accolade and recently released a new Nicklaus game for PC. The title is fantastic — in my opinion, the best one on the market, but it is getting killed at retail and the rumor from inside Activision is that they won't be rushing to do another one.

I'll close with this thought; anyone remember Shiny's "Wild 9" (published by Interplay)? If you read any of the magazines over the past two years, this game was the second coming. (This, of course, was in no small part due to the overwhelming influence of the master of media manipulation himself, Dave Perry.) Guess what? The game has sold less than 50,000 copies in the US (to date) and is being outsold by titles like "Intelligence Qube" and "Brunswick Circuit Bowling". This would (in no small way, I imagine) go a long way toward explaining why Titus, a company that has had a spotty track record (at best) in games publishing in the US, was able to acquire controlling interest in Interplay for \$35 million — how the mighty have fallen! Imagine, Interplay (Earth Worm Jim, Rock 'n' Roll Racing, Descent, Baldur's Gate, MDK, Carmageddon, etc.) being absorbed by a company whose latest claim to fame is "Superman" — a game that took over two years to come to market and so full of crash bugs that it has many wondering just what the "Nintendo Seal of Quality" stands for!

The lessons to be learned?

(1) There is no such thing as a "big" software publisher — stick to what you do well and don't try to compete where you are ill-equipped. The big companies of today are just as likely to be on the scrap heap (or auction block) tomorrow. What is EA without EA Sports (or EA Canada, the development house responsible for most of EA's hit titles)? Lose them and EA could be searching for the nearest oxygen tank.

(2) Read your industry history book. Psygnosis, Interplay, Electrobrain, Sega, Activision, BMG Interactive, NEC, Atari, GT Interactive, Mindscape, Broderbund, Acclaim; the gaming landscape is littered with the remains of companies that grew too big, too fast, or that tried to duke it out with the big players in a particular genre. While some stand poised for potential comebacks (Sega) and some have made it back (Acclaim, Activision), many more have faded into distant memory — leaving a trail of legal notices and red ink in their wake.

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Next Issue

Volume 4 - Issue 10

in the issue

On the cover



Pac-Man World

The September issue of PSExtreme, on sale August 17, will be the perfect accessory to keep you cool (by waving it rapidly back and forth) during those hot summer months. In addition to its soothing functionality, the next issue also promises to come packed with the latest and greatest PS info, including a trip back to the future with a whole new deluge of retro-titles, a spotlight on Electronic Arts' amazing entertainment line-up, and the first hands-on previews of Psygnosis' Wipeout 3 and Fox Interactive's Die Hard Trilogy. Not wanting to stop there, we pledge to have lots and lots of previews and reviews, a couple of interviews, some news, maybe a cheat or two, and a few moist and juicy chicken references. As you can see, there is no reason, whatsoever, to go anywhere else for your PlayStation information. You've been warned.

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A comprehensive look at the latest retro titles

Exclusive



Wipeout 3

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Spotlight on: EA

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Die Hard Trilogy 2

Excerpt



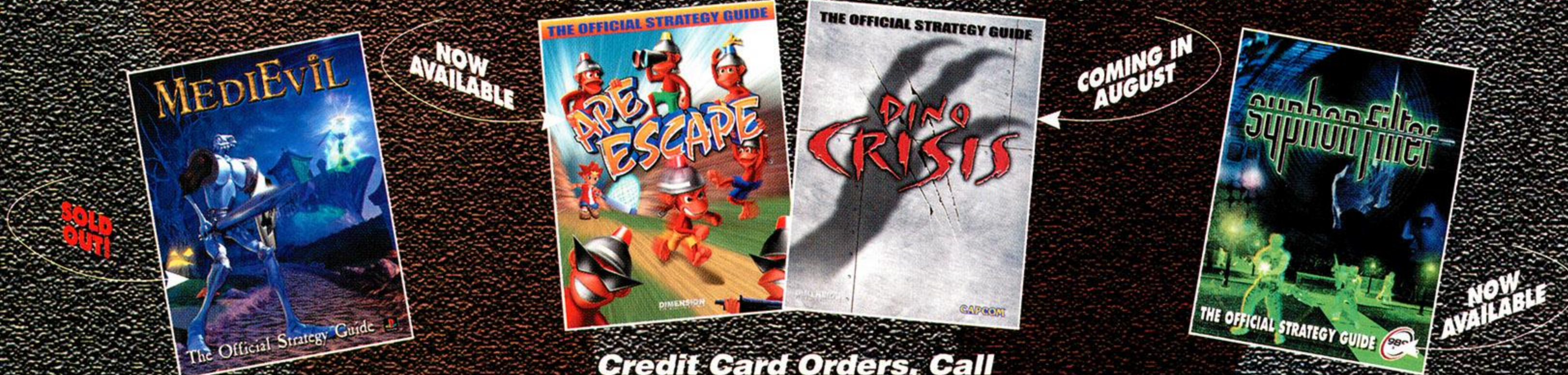
We talk to Core about the future of Lara on the PS

On The Cover!
Pac-Man World

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COMING JULY 14, 1999



The background of the entire page is a large, detailed illustration of a giant, translucent green and yellow cocoon with large, patterned wings. The cocoon is positioned centrally, with its head and antennae visible. Surrounding the cocoon are several circular frames, each containing a different character or creature. These include a red and yellow bird-like creature, a green and white insect, a blue and red dragon-like creature, a purple and white insect, a pink and white insect, a purple and white insect, a red and white insect, a green and white insect, a red and white insect, and a green and white insect. The title "JADE COCOON" is written in a stylized, outlined font across the middle of the cocoon. Below the title, the subtitle "STORY OF THE TAMAMAYU" is written in a smaller, plain font.

JADE COCOON

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